Plane crashes in NY; too early to tell cause

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2001 ★★ 42 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 338 ₱15

Owner of telecom firm cries extortion

By Carlito Pablo and Rocky Nazareno

A BUSINESSMAN, who allegedly bribed First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, said people identified with Arroyo and his wife President Macapagal-Arroyo had wanted to take over two telecommunication firms he was putting up.

"It was a shakedown, an extortion," said Pacifico Marcelo, majority shareholder of the

OWNER/ A15

246 passengers, 9 crewmen aboard

NEW YORK—An American Airlines flight from New York to the Dominican Republic crashed after takeoff Monday, and buildings reportedly were on fire in the Queens borough of New York City.

The Airbus A300, which had 246 passengers and nine crew members, crashed shortly after 9 a.m. (10 p.m. in Manila) and thick, black smoke could be seen miles away.

Intelligence agencies, the FBI and the Fed-

PLANE/ A15

'Don't use tragedy as entertainment'

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Leah Salterio

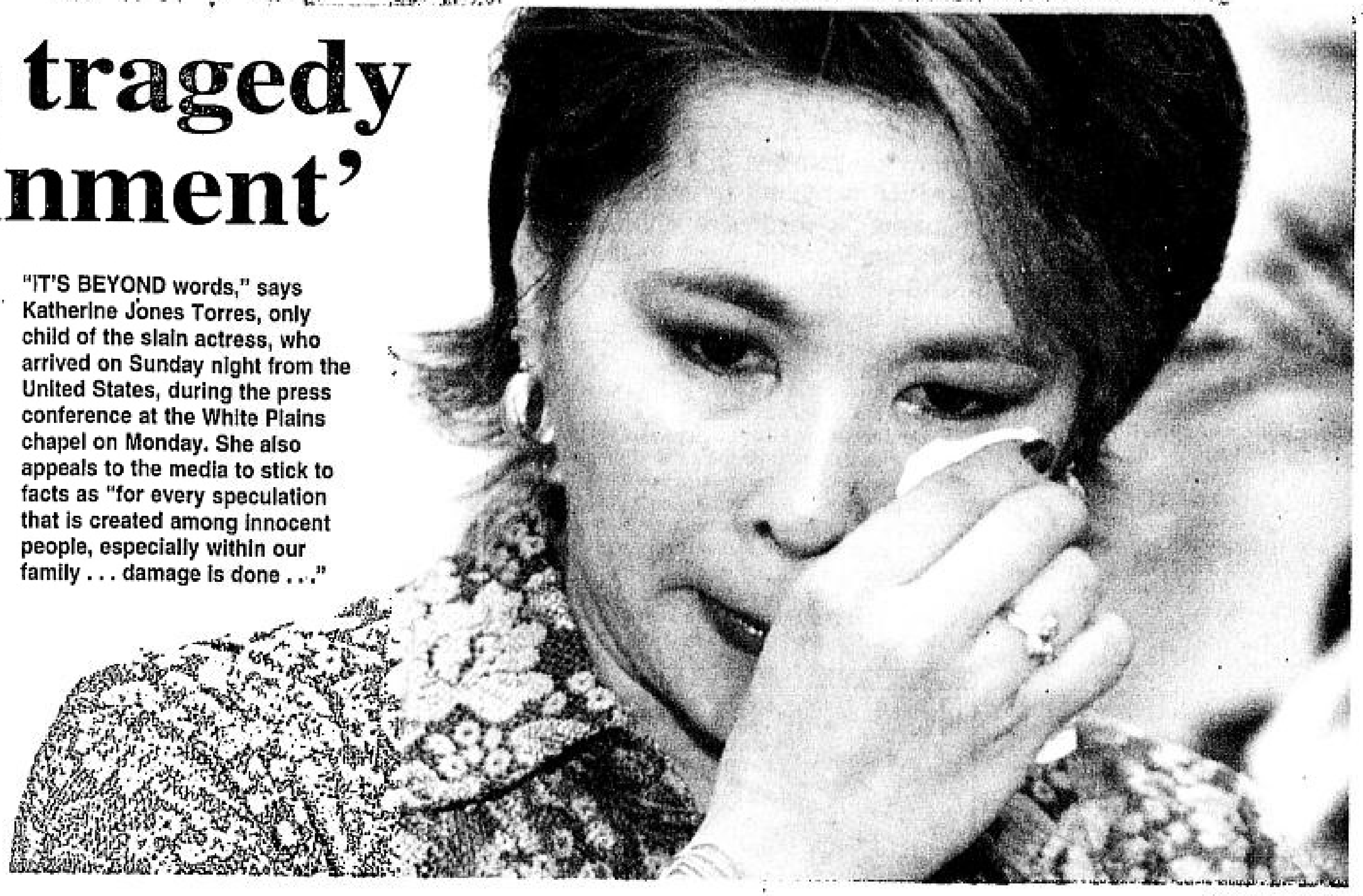
NIDA Blanca's only child yesterday appealed to the media to stop making the killing of her mother grist for the entertainment mill.

Reading from a prepared statement at a press conference yesterday at the Christ the King Chapel in White Plains, Quezon City, Katherine Jones Torres said she was saddened by speculative reports linking members of her family to the murder.

She asked for prayers for her mother and the rest of her family, and urged the media to report only the official findings of the Philippine National Police on the case. The PNP's "Task Force Marsha," chaired by Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, is in charge of the investigation

"For every speculation that is created among innocent people, especially within our family, damage is done to people who do not deserve such pressure from the public," Torres said, adding:

DON'T/ A14



"IT'S BEYOND words," says Katherine Jones Torres, only child of the slain actress, who arrived on Sunday night from the United States, during the press conference at the White Plains chapel on Monday. She also appeals to the media to stick to facts as "for every speculation that is created among innocent people, especially within our family . . . damage is done . . ."

VAL HANDUMON

Husband not suspect at this time

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE HUSBAND of slain actress Nida Blanca has been questioned by investigators but is not considered a suspect at this time, police said yesterday.

"As far as the witnesses are concerned, the latest to be investigated was the victim's husband (Rod Lauren Strunk) and we are still evaluating his statements," said Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, head of the Philippine National Police's Task Force Marsha.

"He was . . . invited as a witness to shed light on other matters concerning this case. As of this time he is a witness," Gualberto said.

Gualberto declined to elaborate on Strunk's statement apart from saying that the actress' husband went to the Atlanta Center in

HUSBAND/ A14

Doc's daughter abducted

Opposition captures key city; Taliban denies claim

KABUL—The opposition Northern Alliance yesterday claimed it had captured Herat, the most important city in western Afghanistan, and was closing in on the last Taliban stronghold in the north.

The ruling Taliban militia, however, denied the claim of the Northern Alliance, a loose and fractious coalition of ethnic minorities backed by US air power. *(More stories on the war on international terrorism in The World, Page A9)*

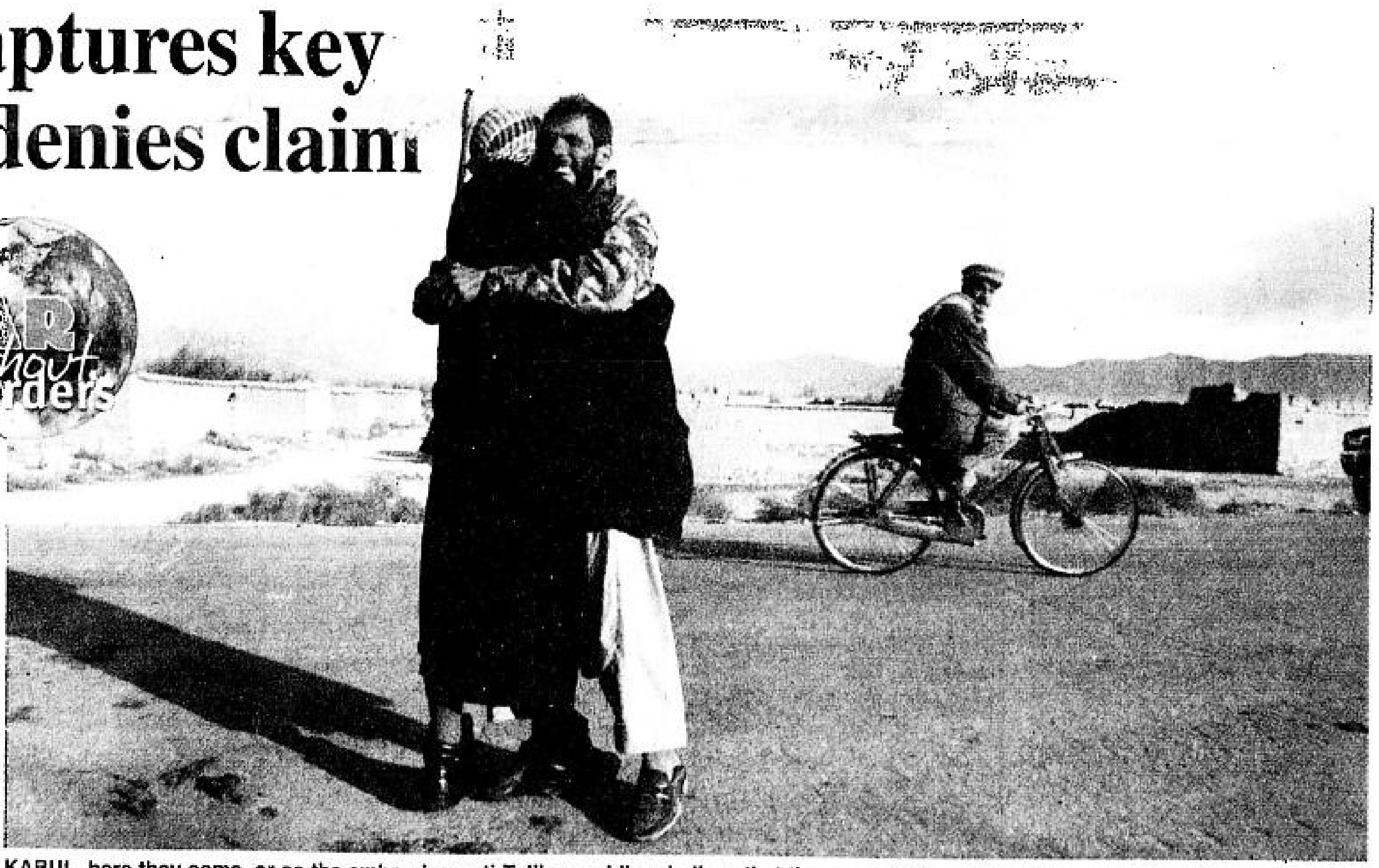
But if true, the fall of Herat would yet be another significant gain by the opposition, which has taken much of northern Afghanistan.

The speed of the Taliban collapse, which began Friday with the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, suggests that many local commanders and Taliban fighters are switching sides rather than offering stiff resistance.

Fighting broke out Monday afternoon along parts of the frontline north of the capital Kabul, the opposition said. With Taliban positions crumbling in the north, the opposition juggernaut appeared rolling toward the capital despite US reservations about the alliance taking the city

OPPOSITION/ A15

WAR without borders



KABUL, here they come, or so the embracing anti-Taliban soldiers believe that they are within striking distance of the Afghanistan capital after the reported fall of key cities Mazar-e-Sharif on Friday and Herat yesterday.

GETTY IMAGES

5-year-old seized in S. Cotabato

By Nelson Flores, Luige del Puerto and Edwin Fernandez, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FOUR armed men in police uniforms abducted the 14-year-old daughter of the owner of a chain of dermatological clinics yesterday morning in Mandaluyong City. And in Pikit, North Cotabato, two unidentified gunmen believed to be members of the Pentagon kidnap group abducted a 5-year-old boy in the afternoon.

The two incidents raised the total number of kidnap victims to a new record high. In Malacañang, however, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said despite the rash of abductions, crime in the Philippines was unlikely to show an increase this year. The police have come under fire for not being able to stop kidnappings by armed groups, which have tarnished the country's image.

Angela Dee Pineda, a resident of Legaspi Village in Makati City, was abducted about 7 a.m. while on her way to school. She is the daughter of well-known dermatologist Dr. Vinzons Pineda and Delia Dee, owners of the Pineda Derm Clinic chain.

Police officials said Pineda and her brother and sister were on their way to the Tabernacle Academy in San Juan on board the family's Starex van when a maroon Toyota FX van with registration plates WHZ 277 blocked their path at the corner of Pilar and Calderon streets,

DOC'S/ A14

EDWIN BACASMAS

DEPARTURE honors for President Macapagal are led by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva at the Lumbia Airport in Cagayan de Oro City from where the President flew for a state visit to Indonesia.

RP, Indonesia to step up naval patrols to stop arms smuggling

By Cynthia D. Balana

JAKARTA (via PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo and her Indonesian counterpart, Megawati Sukarnoputri, yesterday agreed to work more closely to fight terrorism, including intensifying naval patrols to curb arms smuggling.

"Our stance on terrorism is unshakeable. President Megawati and I have agreed to strengthen the proposal discussed at the Asean summit for Asean nations to share intelligence information on transnational crimes and to keep tighter controls over our borders," Ms Macapagal said after their talks at Istana Merdeka, the presidential palace.

In Jakarta for a two-day state visit, Ms Macapagal said all countries in the region must prevent terrorism to allow trade and investment to flourish.

"In this time of crisis and opportunity, there is nothing more natural and more correct than for regions to get together for common defense and action," she added.

Megawati, who made a state visit to Manila in August, said Indonesian and Philippine naval commanders had been ordered to immediately conduct joint border patrols.

Indonesia's Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda said the two nations would work together to curb cross-border trafficking of weapons.

The Abu Sayyaf, which reportedly has links to international terrorist Osama bin Laden, have reportedly been smuggling arms from its bases in Western Mindanao to Indonesian separatists in Aceh.

Ms Macapagal assured Megawati that wiping out the Abu

RP/ A14

Davide refers Sandigan row to full court

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE FEUDING magistrates of the Sandiganbayan hearing the plunder and graft cases of deposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday brought their quarrel within the halls of the Supreme Court when they engaged in a "spirited" dialogue for more than four hours.

But the meeting between Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena and Associate Justice Anacleto Badoy Jr. ended without resolving the issues dividing them.

Ismael Khan Jr., chief of the high tribunal's Public Information Office, said Davide would bring up the issues dividing Badoy and Garchitorena to all 14 Supreme Court justices.

"The chief justice is expected to make an oral report to all the justices in an en banc session of the Supreme Court (today)," Khan said.

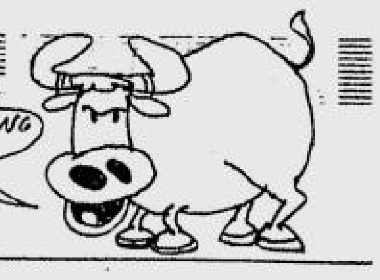
Khan said the full court would resolve the thorny issues affecting Garchitorena and Badoy "by issuing a resolution sometime in the afternoon."

Badoy, chair of the third division handling the plunder case against Estrada, slammed Garchitorena in a press conference on Nov. 4 for allegedly pressuring him to quit his post. Garchitorena accused Badoy of incompetence and absenteeism in a letter to the Supreme Court.

The two were ordered to refrain from issuing statements to the public by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. amid fears that the dispute would

DAVIDE/ A14

Second FRONT PAGE


BAKA PINALALA NG ILLEGAL LOGGING

US Pacific chief here to brief Gloria on terror

BY NORMAN BORDADORA

ADMIRAL Dennis Blair, Commander in Chief of the US Pacific Command (Cincpac), arrived by military aircraft late yesterday afternoon amid tight security provided by the US Embassy and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport police.

The Blair party, which included his wife and an official entourage of 15, were welcomed at the Naia's Balagbag area by Navy Chief Brig. Gen. Jaime Canatoy.

Blair and his party, who had come from the US Pacific forces headquarters in Honolulu, Hawaii, were immediately escorted to the US Embassy by the US Secret Service and police officials.

Blair, the highest-ranking military official of the US in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, is here to discuss with President Macapagal-Arroyo the strategies to be adopted in dealing with local terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf, which the US says are aligned with Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Blair is scheduled to meet with the President tomorrow to brief her on what US anti-terrorist experts sent earlier have found.

The US team of Marines under Col. David Friedovich has been to Basilan where the Abu Sayyaf is holding 10 hostages including a US couple.

The team has evaluated the Philippine military's capabilities in dealing with the Abu Sayyaf which are believed to have been funded and trained by Bin Laden's terrorist network.

Blair is expected to dwell on the AFP's inferior mobility and communications facilities in pursuing the Abu Sayyaf terrorists in their hideouts in the mountains of Basilan.

The briefing would alert the President, who is AFP commander in chief, on what kind of equipment and training were needed.

The US military appears to have heeded the President's call for Washington to help the AFP in dealing with the Abu Sayyaf.

Blair himself is deeply involved in US troop and vessel movements in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions in line with the US-led anti-terrorist campaign in the Middle East against Bin Laden and in Afghanistan against the Taliban regime.

CAMIGUIN FLASH FLOODS

Gov: It was nature, not illegal logging

AS RESCUE workers continued recovery operations in Camiguin, the province worst hit by tropical storm "Nanang," Gov. Pedro Romualdo denied that illegal logging had caused the flashflood that carried sleeping people to their deaths.

"That is a lie. A natural disaster hit the province. It was a whirlwind that caused the flashflood. In fact, most of the trees that fell were planted Gmelina and coconut trees," Romualdo said.

Floodwaters spawned by the tropical storm had come cascading down on unsuspecting residents in the dead of night. Survivors told of being carried away by the rampaging waters in which swirled boulders and logs.

Unofficial reports for the central and southern Philippines region placed the death toll at 134 with 92 persons missing.

In its noon update yesterday, the Department of Social Welfare and Development's official count was 123 dead, 108 injured and 248 missing.

The DSWD also reported that 177,790 families, or 878,933 persons, had been adversely affected by Nanang.

The figures cover Regions V to X and Caraga—a total of 15 provinces, 19 cities, 54 municipalities and 753 barangays.

As of yesterday, 154 evacuation centers were still in operation, serving 37,684 families or 192,195 individuals.

Disaster relief operations have already cost P3.2 million, of which P2.8 million came from local governments, P258,480 from the DSWD and P28,650 from non-governmental organizations.

Nanang also left 605 homes totally damaged and 3,172 partially damaged.

Romualdo said that there is still a rainforest on Camiguin's highest peak, Mt Tiempoong.

He said the island-province was involved in the coconut lumber industry until a strict implementation of the guidelines on re-planting killed that industry.

He said he would meet today with the National Disaster Coordinating Council on rehabilitation plans for the province.

Manny Boniao, vice chair of the Mindanao Advisory Council of the Habitat for Humanity Philippines Foundation, said he was waiting for the Habitat board to approve a plan to provide homes to the flood victims in Camiguin.

"As soon as the board agrees, a task force will be formed to implement the rehabilitation of the island," Boniao told the INQUIRER.

Romualdo said he would ask the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to allow Habitat to use the fallen logs and trees in the construction of new homes for the victims.

Boniao said instead of using the "sweat equity" of the victims to construct their own homes, Habitat will ask for volunteers to build the houses, since the victims might not be psychologically and physically fit to do the work at this time.

Agriculture officials said Nanang left in its wake P333 million in damage to crops and marine products in five regions of the country.

Rice farming and fisheries suffered the heaviest losses following at least three days of heavy rains spawned by the tropical storm, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Edmund Sana told Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez in a memorandum.

The latest figures placed damage to *palay* at P129,582,666 and fisheries at P123,038,785.

Other figures placed damage to livestock at P44,161,800; to agri-infrastructure at P23 million; to corn, P7,939,520; vegetables, P2,540,000, and other crops, P2,931,467.

The figures were culled from Regions V, VI, VII, VIII and X, which suffered the most in the storm. There were no figures available for the other regions.

Nanang (international code name Lingling) had maximum winds of 75 kph. It hit the country Tuesday morning and was out of the Philippine area of responsibility by Friday.

Yesterday, the Department of Health assured local residents that despite the number of human and animal corpses lying about typhoon-ravaged Camiguin, there have been no reports of a disease outbreak on the island.

To ensure that no epidemics occur, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said, the DOH has sent medicines and personnel to the island to make sure the water, food and resettlement areas are clean and free of disease.

"There has been no outbreak of diseases," he said at a press briefing.

Dayrit said if an epidemic were to occur it would likely be "water-borne."

"We are watching out for an outbreak of water-borne diseases," he said, adding that the DOH is making sure the water being drunk by local residents from streams after the water system broke down is chlorinated or boiled.

He said the DOH has also delivered measles vaccines, vitamin A tablets and rehydration pills to the affected areas.

Dayrit also said the World Health Organization has donated P500,000 for medical operations in Camiguin. ***With Volt Contreras, Armand N. Nocum and TJ Burgonio***

₱4.3B in 'safety net' funds missing

SOME P4.3 billion in funds from the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) is missing from the Bureau of Treasury since the government started collecting tariffs and charges on the importation of sensitive agricultural products in 1996.

This was revealed yesterday by opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III who is seeking a Senate inquiry on why only P250.8 million of the estimated P4.6 billion in ACEF have been accounted for by the Bureau of Treasury.

He has filed Senate Resolution 170, which directed the Senate committee on agriculture chaired by Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar to investigate the missing funds.

"This means that there is a shortage of P4.3 billión which could have been appropriated to bankroll the implementation of various vital agricultural modernization programs," said Osmeña, former chair of the Senate committee on agriculture.

The ACEF was created by Republic Act 8178, which was instituted to minimize the effects of the country's accession to the World Trade Organization.

RA 8178 provided for the imposition of minimum access volumes (MAVs) for certain sensitive agricultural products, which would be increased every year.

Tariffs were collected on the importation of these products once they exceed the MAV.

The proceeds would then go to the ACEF to help the agricultural sector become viable, efficient and globally com-

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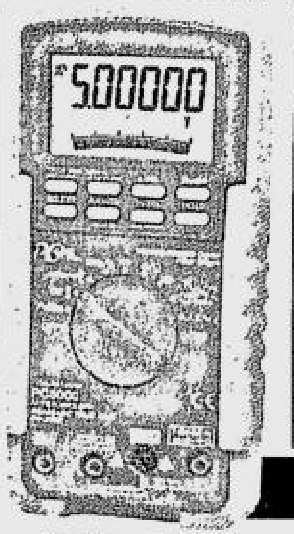
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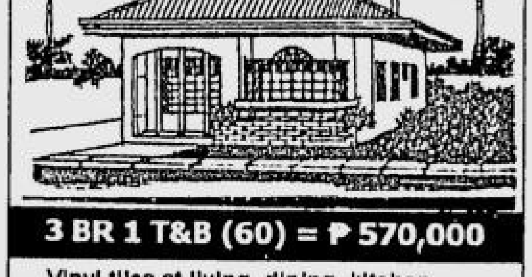
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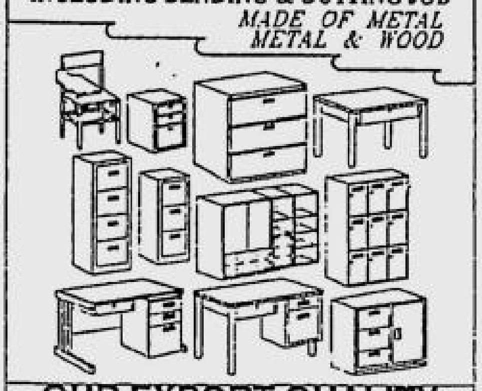
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'EXTORTION, TERRORISM'

Cops tag NPA rebs in cell site attacks

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—The arson attacks on the transmission installations of three telecommunication companies in five Luzon provinces at the weekend were carried out by communist guerrillas, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, the Central Luzon police chief, said yesterday.

The communist New People's Army reportedly struck after the firms refused to pay P8 million in monthly "revolutionary taxes (protection money), said Berroya, claiming that the information came from a "reliable Globe source."

"We presume the NPA has also tried to extort (money) from Smart and Piltel," said Berroya who said he anticipated the phone companies would deny it.

Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the Army's Northern Luzon commander, concurred with Berroya's theory.

"We are positive the NPA is behind all these," Garcia said.

The three mobile phone firms yesterday said their phone network was stable despite the attack in which six of the firms' transmission centers in Central Luzon were torched.

Smart and Piltel, both units of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said disruptions to their phone service since the attack on Saturday night were limited.

Rerouted calls

Smart, whose four sites in Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac provinces were damaged, re-routed phone traffic to adjoining cell sites in these areas to avoid disruption in its phone service, company spokesperson Ramon Isberto said.

He said the firm's subscribers in the affected areas hardly noticed any problems in phone service because the incident took place at night when phone traffic was low.

Isberto said the situation was the same for Piltel, whose cell site in Pampanga province was burned down. Both firms were working to restore operations in the affected sites.

Globe Telecom, owned by the Ayala Group, said its tower in Bataan was intact after the attack but the equipment room was damaged.

"That one we have to restore immediately . . . Our engineers got there yesterday. We hope to restore operations . . . later today," Globe spokesperson Jones Campos told Reuters by phone.

The firms could not estimate the number of subscribers in the affected provinces.

A ranking member of the NPA's Nelson Mesina Command in Tarlac claimed responsibility for the attacks on the two telecommunications installations in that province.

'Major health risks'

The NPA member, in a telephone interview, described Smart's Tarlac installations as "major health risks" to the people living there. He did not elaborate.

Unconfirmed reports said the local Smart office has been receiving demands for revolutionary taxes.

Berroya said an Abucay resident who witnessed the attack in Bataan had identified one of the attackers as an NPA commander from police file photos.

Garcia said the NPA has "turned into a desperate group whose basic motive was money."

"It is not very keen on confidence-building for the peace negotiations," he added.

Berroya said the "terroristic incidents" could be related to the ongoing peace talks between the government and the communists, without saying how.

Garcia said the government should "seriously look" into the arson incidents and other "atrocities" of the NPA and assess if there was enough basis to pursue the peace talks anymore.

Garcia said last weekend's attacks had been the first in Central and Northern Luzon since the communication towers of the Bataan nuclear power plant in Morong were targeted in the 1980s.

Berroya said the firms had not coordinated with the police 48 hours after the attacks, which prompted investigators to initially rule out the NPA involvement.

No arrests

No arrests have been made since the police began their investigation on Sunday.

Berrroya has placed all provincial police commands in the region on "high alert," anticipating similar attacks on private utilities or police stations in the run-up to the NPA's founding anniversary in December.

In Pangasinan, police officials ordered the strengthening of security and fielding of mobile checkpoints near telecommunications facilities in the province after the burning of Smart equipment in Rosales on Sunday.

Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, the provincial police director, said the "extra security effort" was needed as there might be a plan by certain groups to sabotage the telecommunication sector.

"Something is in the offing," Mendoza said, without elaborating.

While not entirely ruling out the NPA, Mendoza said the "well-coordinated plan" was not indicative of the communists' style, he said.

"Usually the NPA targets (a establishment), because of failure to pay revolutionary taxes," he said.

He said the incident could have been staged by a group with "an accurate plan, resources and personnel."

Supt. Peter Donato, the Rosales police chief, said they were still checking out a report that communist rebels from nearby Balungao town were behind the attack.

Tonette Orejas, Russell Arador and Ronaldo Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, Abigail L. HO, Metro Manila, and Reuters

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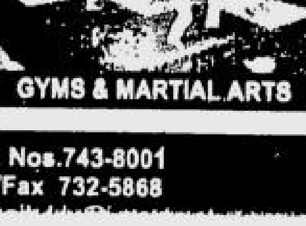

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End is near for Abu, says Southcom chief

By Martin P. Marfil

THE MILITARY said it knew exactly where the 10 hostages are being held by the Abu Sayyaf and has launched an operation to recover them.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said the hostages and their captors had been sighted in a forest located at the boundaries of Isabela City, Lantawan, Maluso and Sumisip towns.

"We recovered some personal belongings of the hostages. Yesterday (Sunday), we inserted troops in the area. But maybe because of the sound of the choppers, the rebels kept moving with their hostages," Cimatu told defense reporters.

He said the hostages appeared to be in good condition as there have been no reports of any of them being carried.

"They are walking on their own and it's an indication that they're still okay," Cimatu said.

The Southcom chief expressed optimism that the crisis is nearing its end, noting that the Abu Sayyaf have dwindled.

The group led by Abu Sabaya, which is holding the 10 hostages, has been reduced to about 60 to 70 men and government forces are concentrated on this group, Cimatu said.

A second Abu Sayyaf leader, Khadafy Janjalani, is said to be in the same area with another group of about 20 to 25 men.

"We believe he (Janjalani) is still within the vicinity and we have a separate effort (against) him but right now, we are concentrating on the recovery of the nine remaining hostages," Ciimatu said.

"The others seem to have lain low . . . there's also a strong indication that others seem to have lost the will to fight and would rather surrender," he said.

"After this crisis, we can now begin our development operation for Basilan," he added.

In Zamboanga City, Sumisip Mayor Jim Saliman has clarified that the firefight in Saluping island last Friday had been caused not by the Abu Sayyaf but was a fight between two families over some misunderstanding arising from a basketball game.

At least six people, including civilian volunteers, were killed when Marines arrived and launched air and ground assaults as the two families feuding were in the middle of a firefight.

Because of the Marine assault, residents of Saluping island have fled, Saliman said.

"The air strikes were uncalled for in a situation where it only involved a *rido* or a feud between two families," Saliman said in a phone interview.

The military earlier reported that some 40 fully armed Abu Sayyaf bandits had attacked the Marines last Friday. At least six bandits were killed in the encounter, the report said.

The military also said it lost one soldier.

But Saliman said the incident involved a basketball game in the morning that came to a brawl later that day.

Some of those involved got their arms and started shooting at each other.

Saliman did not say which families were involved but said they had a longstanding feud, which also stemmed from basketball.

Saliman said there have been efforts to patch up the feud but these have now been set back by the involvement of the military.

The local government and the police are trying to find out who was responsible for dragging the Marines into the firefight, he said.

Southcom Spokesperson Col. Danilo Servando maintained the military position that there was an encounter. ***With a report from Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Asean army chiefs here for meeting

By Martin P. Marfil

TEN Army chiefs from Asean countries are set to meet on Thursday and map out counter-measures against global terrorism.

This was announced yesterday by Philippine Army Spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta who also said that there was a possibility that a multinational force would be formed against terrorists.

"As of now . . . exchange of intelligence is being implemented. This may result into actually sending in forces to help out," Mabanta, in a press conference, said.

Asked if it would lead to the deployment of foreign units against the Abu Sayyaf, he replied: "As I said, this may lead to actual deployment of forces."

The force, he said, could either be "multinational" or initially "bilateral."

Aside from the unified force, Mabanta said that the Asean armies could also borrow equipment and assets from each other.

This is actually the second time that the chiefs of the 10 Asean armies would meet.

The first Asean Chiefs of Armies Multilateral meeting or ACAMM, was held in Thailand last year where the topic was disaster-response.

For this year's meeting at the Edsa Shangri-la, the Philippine Army, headed by Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos, would be presenting specific action plans, known as the Philippine Army Anti-Terrorism Framework to the participants.

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OPPOSITORS of Naia's Terminal 3 rally in front of the Senate.

JESS YUSON

Builder defends Naia 3 deal

THE BUILDER and operator of the Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), yesterday described the class suit filed by two groups in Angeles City as a desperate ploy to stop the $550-million project.

In a press statement, lawyer Moises Tolentino, spokesperson of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco), identified the MIAA-NAIA Association of Service Operators (Maso) as instigator of the recent move made by Move Clark Now (MCN) and Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement (PGKM) to discredit the Terminal 3, which is currently under construction.

"We have no doubt that, as in other previous campaigns discrediting the project, the MIAA-NAIA Association of Service Operators, or whatever is left of it, is behind this move," Tolentino said.

He expressed concern that the 500 other government officials, civic leaders and concerned citizens who signed the petition to annul the concession agreement between the government and the Piatco in the building and operating of the new international passenger terminal under a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) scheme were misled by two Angeles City councilors.

Tolentino clarified that even President Macapagal-Arroyo stated during ceremonies renaming the Clark International Airport as the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) that the Piatco contract has nothing to do with the development of the former military base. Transportation officials also stated that Clark's advancement can start any time and that the Piatco contract cannot and will not stop it.

"These masses were misled by the two councilors and the leaders of the two groups into believing that the Terminal 3 would hinder the further development of DMIA as an international airport," he said.

The two groups held a rally in front of the Senate yesterday to express their opposition to the BOT deal.

Piatco said that under the concession agreement, the DMIA could operate as an international airport and can put up additional structures even before the Naia Terminal 3 starts operating by the end of 2002.

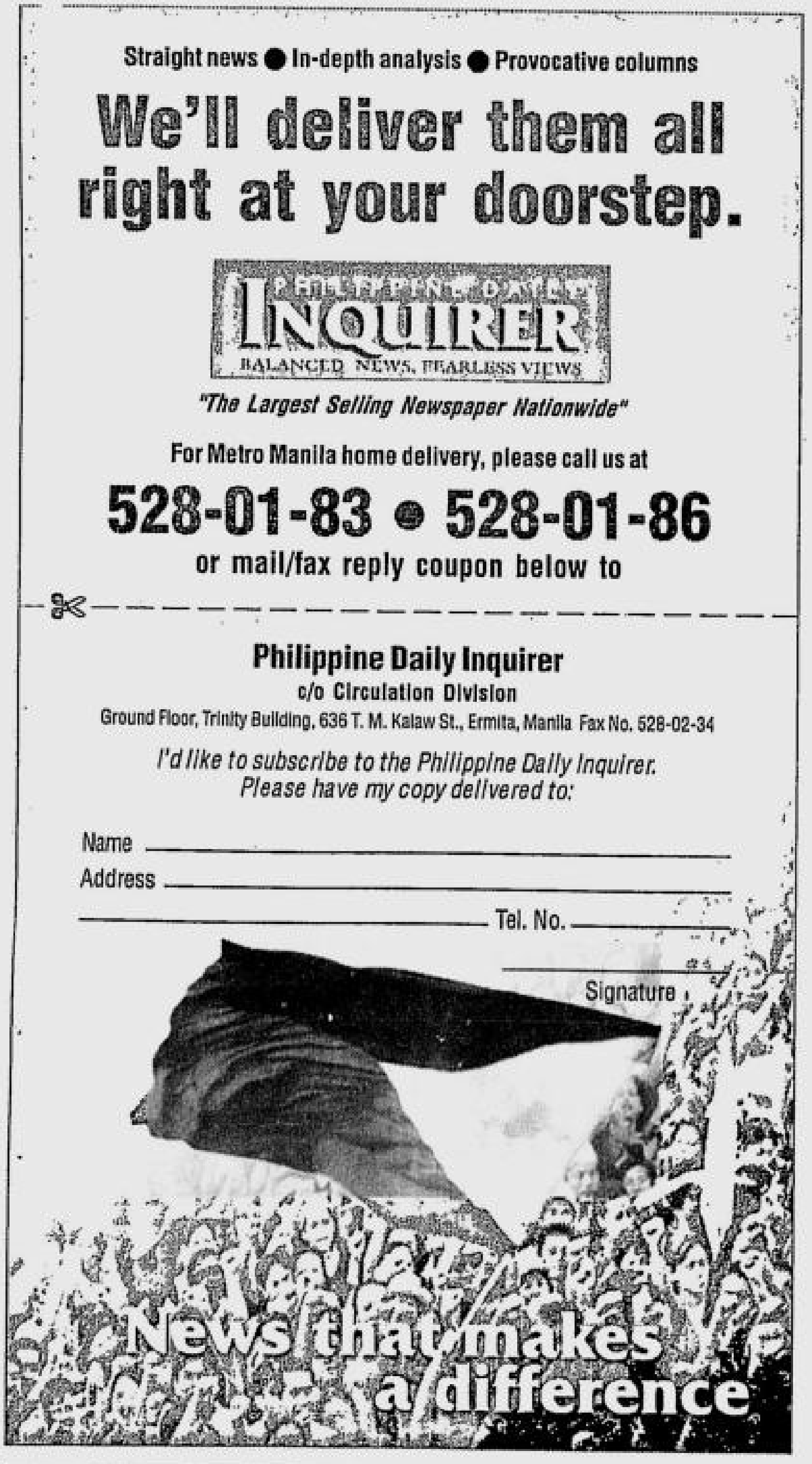
The contract, it said, only calls for the DMIA to operate within its maximum design capacity of 850,000 passengers annually until Terminal 3 reaches the 10 million passengers capacity for three consecutive years.

Tolentino said that they could only take pity on these groups that were misled by Maso who for several times had been behind failed attempts to discredit the multimillion dollar project.

He pointed out that Maso started with issuing paid advertisements airing false claims about so-called onerous provisions in the contract, followed by a well-publicized plunder case where an alleged fake witness and a "forged" affidavit was used.

Tolentino said Maso also came out with another paid advertisement naming several foreign airlines allegedly questioning the Piatco contract, only to be later rebuffed by the very same airlines who protested that Maso used their names without authorization.

"It must be pointed out, even the Philippines Airlines whose cause is being vigorously defended by Maso, doesn't want to divert its flights to Clark. How consistent can Maso get?" Tolentino said.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Villar, Arroyo mark first year of Erap impeachment

By Rocky Nazareno

A YEAR after setting into motion the impeachment process that eventually led to the ouster of President Joseph Estrada, two vital players now find themselves on opposite sides on what the event means today

Sen. Manuel Villar was the Speaker of the 11th Congress when he railroaded the submission of the impeachment complaint to the Senate on Nov. 13, 2000.

A bang of the gavel by Villar signaled the transmission of the impeachment complaint to the Senate which, in turn, was constitutionally-mandate to constitute itself into an impeachment jury.

"What I did was right and I now feel vindicated," Villar yesterday said as he recalled that tumultuous day in the House when a pro-Estrada congressman even slapped the House sergeant-at-arms for removing the House mace.

Villar admitted that the banging of the gavel was an "opportunity that seldom comes in a political leader."

Sen. Joker Arroyo, who had been one of the leaders of the opposition against Estrada, was more self-effacing about his role in ousting the former president.

"We need not celebrate Nov. 13 as the day that the impeachment process started. Let's just look at it as an event from which our people should be able to learn lessons from," Arroyo said.

Arroyo was the lead prosecutor who tracked down the money trail created by alleged anomalous kickbacks made by Estrada.

Arroyo was also the prosecutor who uncovered the now-infamous Jose Velarde account.

Arroyo underscored that focus should now be on the criminal charges that have been filed against Estrada before the Sandiganbayan.

"We had a hell of a time introducing evidence, which are now the same evidence being presented before the Sandiganbayan," he said.

Arroyo said government lawyers should "be able to prosecute from what we established here in the impeachment case."

"(Our efforts resulted) in a change of presidency. And if the prosecutors do not try hard enough, that change would have been for naught,'' he said.

Imelda blamed for pension brouhaha

By Martin P. Marfil

THE DEPARTMENT of National Defense yesterday blamed the Marcos camp for making a media event of the department's granting Imelda Marcos a pension as the widow of a war veteran.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes has been roundly criticized for granting the pension application and for personally handing over a check for P46,500 to Imelda, the widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"The only special thing about the case was that Mrs. Marcos' camp made a media event out of her unsolicited act of personally going to (Reyes) to convey her thanks," Ros Manlangit, the DND public affairs chief, said in a statement.

Manlangit said Imelda's claim, which she had filed only two weeks before, had been expeditiously processed because a new administrator had just been appointed to the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office with orders to institute reforms in the processing of applications.

Akbayan Rep. Loretta-Ann Rosales and Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran both criticized the DND for giving priority to Imelda's claim over the claims of poor widows of other veterans.

Critics have also pointed out that the Marcos family, which is accused of amassing billions of dollars in ill-gotten wealth is hardly in need of the money.

The PVAO, however, has defended the pension grant to Imelda, saying she was deemed eligible to receive benefits arising from her husband's being a World War II veteran.

The PVAO chief, retired Navy Commodore Artemio Arugay, said the law provides an old-age pension for the surviving spouse of war veterans but only if they do not re-marry.

He also characterized Imelda, who arrived to collect her check on Nov. 7 on board a shiny black limousine and accompanied by several aides, as just an "ordinary pension claimant."

The PVAO administrator also pointed out the late dictator was never convicted of any crime, although cases have been filed against the Marcoses. Even if the dictator had been convicted, it would still not have affected the grant of the pension benefit to Imelda, Arugay said.

"The disqualification to benefits of convicted criminals as an accessory penalty, is personal to the convict. It does not extend to the entitlement of benefits to his or her next of kin," he said.

The only limitations set by law, Arugay said, were those pertaining to death, remarriage, receipt of similar pension for the same consideration from other government funds or from the United States government and commission of fraud.

House nixes bid to recall budget

THE HOUSE majority unanimously rejected last night the bid of the minority coalition to scrap last month's approval on second reading of the bill providing for a P780.8-billion national budget for 2002.

''We unanimously voted to deny the expected motion for reconsideration by the minority on the approval of the budget bill on second reading," Speaker Jose de Venecia told reporters after the majority coalition held a two-hour caucus.

After a two-week break, the House resumed its session yesterday only to suspend it as both the majority and minority coalitions met in separate caucuses.

De Venecia said while they "symphatize" with the position taken by the minority, the budget bill was "overwhelming approved" by the ruling majority on second reading at 5:10 a.m. of Oct.26.

"The approval of the bill is final and was done before the nation, in the presence of Cabinet members and hundreds of government employees," the Speaker added.

Solons reject stiff rules on absenteeism

By Juliet L. Javellana

HABITUALLY absent members of the House of Representatives could face serious penalties, including expulsion from Congress, under new rules drawn up by the House ethics committee.

But, as expected, the new rules were rejected by the House majority during a caucus last night.

Rep. Antonio Abaya, ethics committee chair, submitted the new rules that called for habitual absentees to be fined P10,000, to have their names published in the media, and to be suspended or even expelled from Congress.

The new rules were to be submitted for approval by the majority in caucus yesterday before being sent to the House in plenary session.

But Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco said the caucus became "very emotional" after most of the administration congressmen found the rules to be too harsh.

Cuenco said the congressmen felt that the publication of the names of habitual absentees was too much. They reasoned out that since the absences were reflected in the congressional journal anyway, it was up to enterprising reporters to dig them up.

"We should not be the ones doing it,'' Cuenco said.

He said the congressmen also disagreed with the proposal to deduct P10,000 from their monthly salaries for each day that they are absent without a justifiable reason.

Cuenco described the new rules as being in a state of "stalemate."

Speaker Jose de Venecia said a committee of three has been created to submit another "detailed proposal" on the new rules by Wednesday.

The new rules against absenteeism were drafted after the House minority complained about the lack of a quorum during last month's deliberations on the proposed P780.8-billion national budget.

Abaya submitted the new rules to De Venecia yesterday just before the caucus.

Under the proposed rules, a House member who is absent five session days a month would be considered a habitual absentee.

Habitual absence without a justifiable reason would merit a fine, censure and suspension or expulsion from the House.

Abaya said illness, official travel, speaking engagements, fortuitous events and "other analogous circumstances" would constitute valid reasons.

Attending to guests and constituents while House sessions are in progress would not be considered an excuse, he added.

To catch those who are absent, the ethics committee recommended that the roll be called three times a day—after the opening rites, sometime during the session and just before adjournment.

"To be considered present, members must respond to all three roll calls,'' Abaya said.

Absence at any of the roll calls will be considered absent for the day, he said.

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Terminal cancer patients should be given morphine–DOH chief

By Armand N. Nocum

DAYRIT

PERSONS with late-stage cancer should be allowed to use the addictive drug morphine rather than suffer the unbearable pain that comes with the disease, the Department of Health said yesterday.

At the same time, the DOH revealed that the number of persons dying from cancer—from 30 deaths per 100,000 population in 1974—has risen dramatically to 41 deaths per 100,000 at recent count.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit advised Filipino doctors to be "liberal" in prescribing morphine to their cancer patients, even if it causes addiction.

He said the reluctance of doctors to prescribe morphine has resulted in unnecessary, excruciating pain for cancer patients nationwide.

"In the terminal cases, what you really want to do is relieve the pain and make the patient as comfortable as possible," Dayrit said at a press briefing where he also announced the holding of the 16th Asia Pacific Cancer Conference (APCC) here.

Dayrit's suggestion is a departure from the teachings of the "old school" where doctors were warned against liberally prescribing morphine.

Dr. Ernesto Domingo, chair of the two-day international cancer meet, agreed that doctors "trained earlier had been warned repeatedly about the dangers of using morphine, among which was the possibility of addiction."

"But we know that addiction is not a very valid issue when it comes to (cancer)," Domingo said. "We are not worried about addiction, what we want is pain relief," he said.

Dr. Antonio Villalon, APCC secretary general and president of the Philippine College of Physicians, likewise agreed, noting that morphine has been greatly "under-utilized" in the provinces.

"The present problem is still lack of education among patients and even doctors on the liberal use of morphine," he said. "Some are still afraid to use it, (fearing that) the side effects would outweigh the benefits, but that's actually a misconception."

He said doctors are also hampered by the tight controls imposed by the Bureau of Food and Drugs on narcotic drugs like morphine. Doctors need to get a "license" from the BFAD to prescribe morphine.

Domingo said they are working with the government to "simplify procedures in prescribing the drug, without affecting the government's fight against drug abuse."

Morphine tablets cost less than P10 each. They should be taken at least four times a day to benefit a cancer patient.

MENDOZA EXTENSION

For once, Ping supports Gloria

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has found an unlikely ally in former Philippine National Police chief and now Senator Panfilo Lacson in her efforts to defend her decision to extend the term of Lacson's successor, Leandro Mendoza.

"It's always the prerogative of the President," said Lacson in reaction to the extension of Mendoza's term as PNP chief.

In fact, Lacson explained that "should the President appoint somebody to a post today but he would be retiring tomorrow, that person can still finish his term."

"There is no prohibition on this (extending Mendoza's term)," Lacson added.

Mendoza replaced Lacson as PNP Chief at the height of the Edsa 2 uprising.

Lacson's own appointment by then President Joseph Estrada as PNP Chief in 1999 was not without the same kind of resistance that the extension of Mendoza's term is currently getting.

Lacson's critics had fiercely opposed the decision of Estrada to appoint him as PNP Chief because there were others in the PNP heirarchy who were Lacson's senior.

And this is probably why Lacson had a clearer understanding of the intense grilling that Ms Macapagal and Mendoza have been getting.

"It is still proper," he said.

And when Senate reporters sought a clarification if, for a change, he was agreeing with Ms Macapagal, Lacson could only answer: "It's not really like that. (My comments) were only for the sake of (giving) opposing views (on the extension of Mendoza's term)."

RP elected to int'l information council

THE PHILIPPINES was elected one of the 26 IFA Council Members out of 190 member countries in the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All (IFA) Program at the 31st General Conference of Unesco in Paris. Out of 8 nominees from Asia, the Philippines came out second, next to India. The others include Japan, China and New Zealand.

Dr. Florangel Rosario-Braid, president of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication and Chairperson, Communication Committee of the Unesco National Commission of the Philippines will sit in the Council.

The IFA Council is the policy making body on programs and projects that promote universal access to cyberspace, multilingualism, public broadcasting, preservation of diversity of human heritage and use of information technology in support of science, education and culture in eradicating poverty and the construction of a knowledge society.

The IFA will undertake preparatory work for the 2003 Information Summit in Geneva which will include issues such as balancing protection of intellectual property rights with providing people access to public domain.

Public domain includes information essential for citizens in a democratic society (e.g., statistics, laws and regulations, information on health, the environment, agriculture and the security) to be defined by each State without prejudicing the existing rights of authors and copyright holders and without risk of appropriation by private concerns for profit-making.

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OPINION

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Muzzling the press

EDITORIAL

IT'S reassuring to hear President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo say she has no plan to gag the media. On her weekly TV program last Saturday, Ms Macapagal said that "the cure might be worse than the sickness." She was commenting on a statement of businessman Raul Concepcion that the government could use the economic summit on Nov. 26 "to reflect whether the (country's) free-wheeling democracy and press are a deterrent to economic growth." Concepcion, chair of the Federation of Philippine Industries, also hinted that the President could use special powers to clamp down on the supposedly "freewheeling practices of Philippine democracy."

His statements echoed the formula for development of Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, the father of the Singapore's economic miracle. Lee, at every opportunity, has lectured the Philippines on its exuberant democracy which, he says, "leads to undisciplined and disorderly conditions...inimical to development."

The President has rightly said that the Philippines would not thrive under a dictatorship. Authoritarianism may be good for Singapore but it is not necessarily good for the Philippines. Our country experienced dictatorship under the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos, and look what it did to us. The bad legacy of the Marcos dictatorship continues to haunt us to this day, and is causing many of the country's political, economic, social and moral problems.

Ms Macapagal said that it is better when she disagrees with the media reports. "It's in the context of press freedom. I'd rather say the reports are wrong and that I am irritated than clamp down on the freedom of the press." The President, who was helped a lot by a largely sympathetic press in her assumption of the presidency, obviously knows the important role that the press plays in a democracy.

The President's statements are reminiscent of those of the American statesman Thomas Jefferson, who said that if he were made to choose between a licentious press and no press freedom at all, he would not hesitate to choose the former. Jefferson it was who also said, "The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

There are remedies against a licentious press—libel suits, complaints to the Press Council or a newspaper's ombudsman, a newspaper boycott, etc. But there can be no remedy, no protection for the people, except for those who are in power, when the press is not free. We had ample experience with the suppression of press freedom during the Marcos dictatorship and it is an experience that we would not want to go through again.

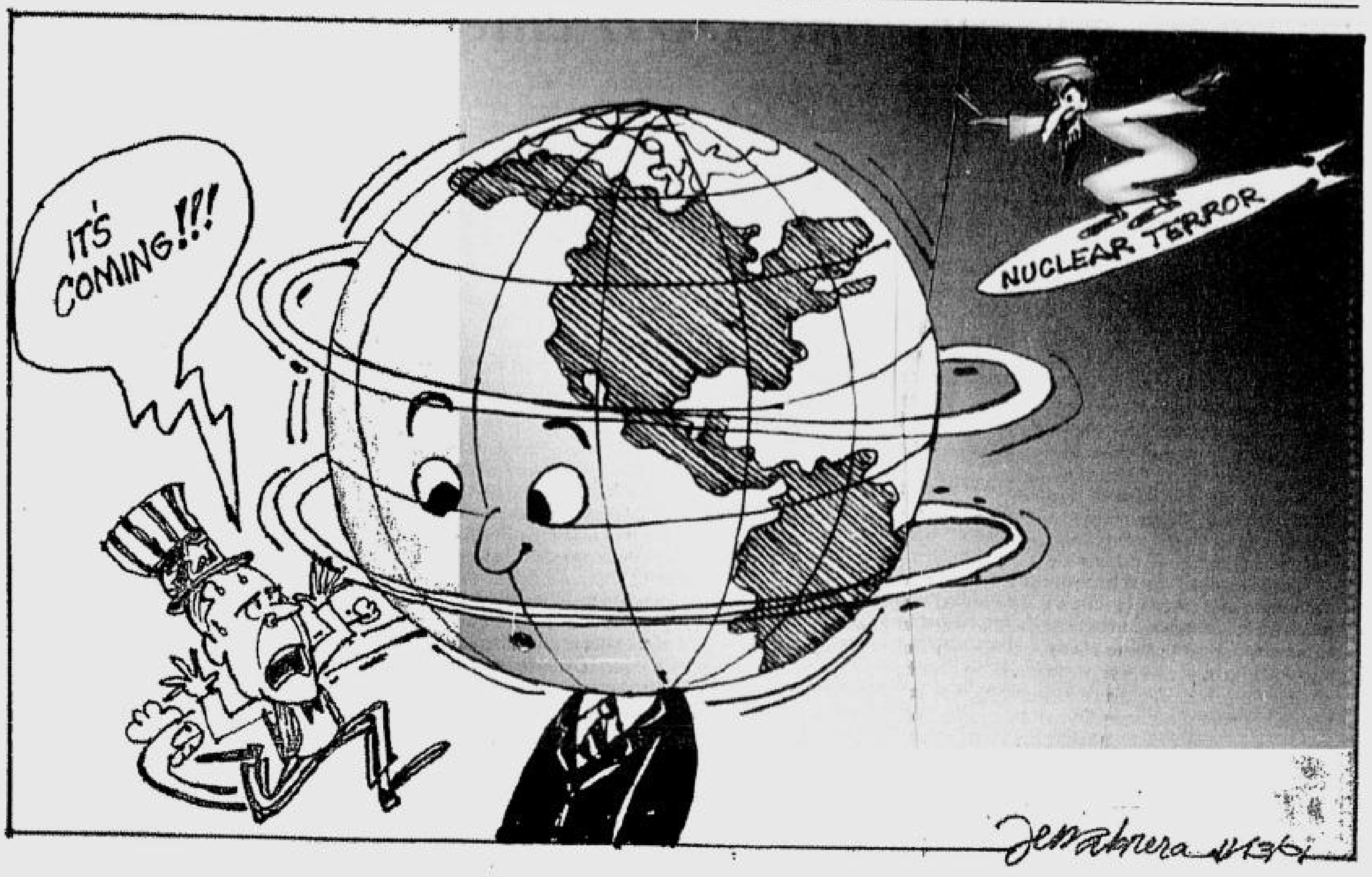
The freedom of the press is the bedrock of all freedoms. That is why a person who would control a country first suppresses the freedom of the press. Benjamin Franklin put it this way: "The liberty of the press is indeed essential. Whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freedom of the press."

As recently as two years ago, then President Joseph Estrada tried to suppress press freedom. He succeeded in silencing The Manila Times which was critical of him and his administration. He tried to silence the INQUIRER by having his cronies and friends mount an advertising boycott against it. The ad boycott hurt the INQUIRER, but it did not bring the paper to its knees. About six months after the ad boycott was imposed, it was lifted.

Now, the Philippine press is back to its exuberant, rambunctious, and some say, excessive, licentious ways. It has been accused of reporting mostly negative developments. These "negative" stories, like the coup rumors and stories about the rash of kidnappings, it is said, have adversely affected the stock market, the peso and the investment climate. And because of this, businessmen like Concepcion would consider reining in the press for the sake of the economy.

But initial moves to control the press could ultimately lead to the complete loss of press freedom. Again, let's hear Jefferson: "Our liberty depends on freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." A press cannot be said to be "somewhat free" or "less free" or "more free." It's either a nation has a free press or a controlled press.

We've gone through the totalitarian experience when there was no freedom of the press. We cannot allow it to happen again.



A date that will live in infamy

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE THREE branches of government—executive, legislative, judiciary—are notorious for their slowness in doing anything. But not when there is plenty of money involved. More specifically, bribe money. Consider this very exceptional case:

On Oct. 25, 2000, the Estrada administration launched the "O Ilaw" program, an executive-legislative partnership for rural electrification. A joint undertaking involving the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Power Corp. (NPC), the National Electrification Administration (NEA) and the House of Representatives, "O Ilaw" was envisioned to achieve 100-percent barangay electrification by the year 2004.

At least 82 representatives submitted project proposals under the "O Ilaw" program, but none of the agencies involved moved to implement the projects.

Until May 28, 2001.

On that momentous day, several things happened with lightning speed:

First, the NEA requested the Napocor to release P470 million for the "O Ilaw" program.

Second, Napocor president Jesus Alcordo approved the request and authorized the release of P470 million to the NEA through the Commonwealth Avenue branch of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), the branch nearest to the House of Representatives. Talk about promptness.

Third, immediately thereafter, the Napocor sent a voucher signed by Alcordo to DBP, Commonwealth Avenue branch, authorizing the transfer.

Finally, in the afternoon of the same day, after the voucher had been released and the P470 million transferred, the Napocor management supposedly held a special meeting to justify the release of the P470 million without the approval of the board of directors.

All of these things—request for P470 million, approval and authorization of the release, fund transfer, and special Napocor management meeting justifying the transfer—happened in one day, May 28, 2001. These are decisions and actions that ordinarily take weeks or months to make.

What was so important about May 28 that all these fast-break actions had to be made that day? May 28, 2001, if you will remember, was the opening of a special session of Congress called by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The legislation that the special session was to act on was the Electric Power Industry Act, or simply the Power Bill, authorizing the privatization of Napocor power plants and other assets, which was being tossed back and forth in Congress because of popular opposition to it. The bill would authorize the sale of those assets at bargain prices but make the people pay for Napocor's debts that would be left behind. No wonder the legislature refused to pass it.

But surprise, surprise, only two days after the release of the P470 million on the opening day of the special session, Congress passed the Power Bill. It was signed into law by the President on June 8.

Where did all that money go? It is not difficult to conclude that the P470 million was used as "incentive" (a polite term for "bribe") for the representatives to pass the Power Bill.

According to the NEA, the money was used to "reimburse" representatives. Reimburse them for what? For electrification projects in their districts.

As of March 1, 2001, there were 149 representatives who filed requests for reimbursement. If the P470 million were divided among them equally, each would have received more than P3.1 million. Did each of them dip into their own pockets to fund P3.1 million of barangay electrification projects? Were there any projects at all? Ha, ha, ha!

That's not all. In his haste to transfer the P470 million—most likely to obey a Malacañang order—Alcordo probably committed a crime. There was no resolution by the Napocor board allocating P470 million for the "O Ilaw" project.

Alcordo obviously tried to cover his ass. Sometime during that very busy day, the Napocor supposedly held a special meeting where the lightning release of P470 million to NEA without board approval was justified.

On May 30, two days after the release of the fund, Alberto C. Pangcog, Napocor corporate secretary, issued a "secretary's certificate" quoting this alleged excerpt from the alleged minutes of the alleged meeting:

"The National Power Board noted that the implementation of the government O Ilaw Rural Electrification program by Management pursuant to the National Power Board Resolution No. 2000-133 dated 16 October 2000, the Memorandum of the then Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Mario V. Tiaoqui and the memorandum of (then) Secretary Jose Isidro N. Camacho dated 24 May 2001, through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) allocating funds from the NPC approved budget for fiscal year 2001, need not be submitted to and (be) approved by the National Power Board."

Pangcog prepared and submitted the certification at the request of Alcordo.

But Alcordo cannot lean on Napocor Board Resolution 2000-13 and the cited MOA. Neither states that the Napocor president can disburse funds for the "O Ilaw" project without the approval of the Napocor board.

Here's another illegality: Alcordo mentioned in his memo to Pangcog that the fund transfer was pursuant to a May 28, 2001 MOA executed by the Napocor and NEA. Actually, the MOA was undated.

The undated MOA was sent on May 29, 2001 by Alcordo to NEA Administrator Manuel Luis Sanchez for the latter's signature. Thus, this MOA could not be properly dated May 28, 2001 and could not provide any legal basis for the fund transfer because as of May 28, it was not yet signed by the NEA administrator.

The undated MOA bearing the signatures of both Alcordo and Sanchez became official only on May 31, 2001 when it was notarized by lawyer Edgardo Ll. Padilla.

Thus, the transfer of P470 million from the Napocor to NEA was completed on May 28, 2001 even before the document allegedly authorizing it could be legally finalized.

Cracks in the head

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT was nice to find my column, "Cracks on the wall" (Nov 8), the object of a minor debate in the "Never Again" forum in the e-mail. One letter writer summed up the objections to it by saying:

"It still puzzles me why many in the Left support the fascist theocratic regime in Afghanistan. This regime embodies everything that all true leftists, liberals and progressives should fight against: it's a violent totalitarian regime that oppresses women, practices ethnic cleansing and religious discrimination, promotes obscurantism, etc. I suppose the Left just hates the United States so much."

I do not know that the mainstream Left still counts me as one of their own, especially after I questioned the continuing validity of the socialist vision and the NDF's culpability in the "killing fields" in a couple of columns early this year. But whether so or not, I still claim to be a leftist and am damn proud of it.

But well may the letter-writer remain puzzled the rest of his life because his question is patently wrong. It is premised on the arrant nonsense perpetrated by George Bush that either you are for America or the Taliban, either you are for the bombing of Afghanistan or for terrorism. If people want to believe that nonsense, that is their business. But they are knocking down a straw man of their own making by thinking that is the position people who do not believe in their silliness hold.

In fact, it wasn't George Bush and the people who now loudly call for the Taliban's destruction who first discovered their fascist theocracy, it was the leftist women's groups. It was they who exposed the Taliban's cruel religious rituals, especially female circumcision. Even before many Americans (or many Filipinos in America, who tend to be more strident) heard of the Taliban, or knew exactly where Afghanistan was, those women's groups had been loudly calling for universal condemnation of—and action against—the Taliban's barbaric practices.

In fact also, it was George Bush's predecessors who first discovered the virtues of the Taliban and their right to mount a fascist theocratic state. We have this straight from the horse's (never has that idiom been more apt) mouth. Asked recently if he regretted arming the Taliban to fight the Soviets, Zbigniew Brzezinsky, Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, swore fervently that he did not. "What is most important to the history of the world, the Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred-up Muslims or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the Cold War?"

Well, it's those same "stirred-up Muslims" we are now called upon to forgo all reason and caution to destroy. What's the equation this time? What is more important to the history of the world, a few more stirred-up Muslims or the end of Osama Bin Laden?

Even more revealingly, Brzezinsky said: "According to the official version, CIA aid to the mujahideen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan. But in reality, it was on July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. That very day, I wrote a note to the President in which I explained to him that in my opinion this was going to induce a Soviet military intervention."

So, even worse, the United States did not arm the Taliban to fight a Soviet invasion, it armed the Taliban to **provoke** a Soviet invasion. The whole idea being to mire the Soviets in their own Vietnam. It's that kind of cynicism, or deviousness, or plain stupidity that's throwing the world into a fire.

I agree with the letter-writer 101 percent when he says the Kabul regime embodies everything that true leftists, progressives and liberals should fight against. I do not particularly like organized religion, quite apart from its fundamentalist expressions, whether it is Christian, Muslim, Jewish or Hindu. I like even less religions that give religious leaders political powers and make of women male possessions. I like even less religious fanaticism, and spoke out when the ayatollahs of Iran vowed death on Salman Rushdie for writing "The Satanic Verses." I like even less the Taliban, who truly represent the dark ages of humanity.

But why should my, or anybody else's, disliking them be a reason for mingling their atoms with the deserts sands?

Quite incidentally, another letter-writer says it is not true the United States is bombing Afghanistan since it hasn't even bombed one percent of it, and limited its strikes only to enemy sites. Well, to use that logic, why call the Sept. 11 attacks an attack not just on America but on all civilization when the razed sites represent only little more than zero percent of America, and when the targets were not the Statue of Liberty or Central Park but the Pentagon, the World Trade Center and (prospectively) the White House, symbols of American power? At the very most, the letter-writer forgets the four million refugees who now huddle in the Pakistani and Iranian borders, bracing themselves for the Afghan winter.

Every time I hear George Bush and Tony Blair talk about the Taliban's benightedness and cruelty to their own people, I am not reminded of the justice of their cause, I am reminded of William McKinley talking of manifest destiny and the white man's burden. That's what that particular rhetoric amounts to, the right of the presumably enlightened, and quite incidentally wronged, to civilize the arguably barbaric—and quite tangentially compromised—with a krag.

I will not bother to protest the notion that people who object to the American bombing of Afghanistan "must hate the United States so much." People who cannot grasp the concept that you do not need to love the Taliban to object to their slaughter will not be able to grasp it either.

Wanted in China: 10 million new jobs each year

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

Xiamen—Over the weekend, Philippine immigration officials, led by Commissioner Andrea Domingo, and some members of the media left Beijing on a China Southern flight to the progressive city of Fu Zhou, the capital of Fujian province on the eastern coast. From Fu Zhou, we visited nearby Quanzhou by bus and ended up at this southern seaport city, from which we will take our flight back to Manila.

The same weekend, China was admitted into the World Trade Organization during a meeting in Qatar, ending a quest that lasted about 15 years. China's entry into the WTO is controversial and viewed with a mixture of gladness and apprehension by other member countries. One school of thought feels that it's better to have China in the WTO so that henceforth it would be subject to the rules of the global economy and hopefully cooperating with them. On the other hand, there are fears that its entry into the WTO would further flood Southeast Asia and other parts of the world with cheap Chinese goods, killing many local industries and further weakening their economies. Indeed, can anyone compete with the vast army of cheap Chinese labor and the compelling circumstances in which they work?

* * *

The Chinese themselves seem to have mixed feelings about their WTO entry. Those I talked to said that perhaps now they can look forward to buying more goods from abroad, especially the signature brands they seem to relish so much, at cheaper prices. Right now imported goods are so steeply priced because of high state taxes, but entry into the WTO assures the lowering of tariffs on various goods in stages. On the other hand, there is the same fear that other developing countries such as the Philippines feel: that safety nets are still not in place, thus jeopardizing certain infant Chinese industries and swelling the ranks of the jobless.

Frankly, however, it's difficult to see China being swamped by other economies. The possibility that the reverse would happen is very real.

* * *

I had earlier noted that the Chinese in the cities and industrial areas have been enjoying unprecedented prosperity over the last 10 years since China accelerated the opening to the world that Deng Xiaoping envisioned since the late 1970s. The Chinese now have more money to invest in such things as apartments, cars, signature items and travel, and an incredibly large number of them have become successful entrepreneurs. In fact, not a few have become awfully rich, and the talk here is that the rich in China are really very rich.

In Beijing I discussed the changing face of socialism with some of the Chinese officials with whom we interacted, as well as with Filipino journalist Jaime FlorCruz, CNN bureau chief in Beijing, who has been living in the capital for 30 years now. A Chinese lady official pointed out that what China's displaying is what has been termed "socialism with Chinese characteristics." She recalled that for a long while there was a lot of debate about the merits of their system over others, about what's good for the Chinese people and what's not. "But after a while we decided to just stop all this debate and choose what's good for us."

* * *

What seems to be happening, said FlorCruz with a laugh, is that the Chinese like to ascribe whatever is good here to socialism, and whatever is bad to capitalism. This chopsuey approach has been motivated mainly by "pragmatism," he said, and one indication of the change of orientation is that Communist Party leaders are now inviting big successful capitalists to join the party. I asked another Chinese source about this and she opined that while the party once successfully rode on the traditional pillars of support such as the farmer and labor sectors to revolutionize the country, now it recognizes the big role that the business sector has played to transform the economy into a modern and progressive one.

* * *

Things are looking good, but the problems are there. To begin with, the prosperity has been uneven. While the areas from Beijing in the north to the eastern part along the coast up to Xiamen in the south has grown by leaps and bounds, dazzling the world with their progress and capitalistic trappings, the rural country especially in the west has remained stagnant. Wages there have stagnated for years and the great masses of people have remained poor. Now economic planners plan to pour millions of funds into the west to accelerate development.

The ability to develop rural China, however, will depend on how the economy will fare, and right now there's fear of a slowdown. And when economic experts are planning for a population of 1.3 billion, the prospect could send shivers down their spine, as it could revive old restlessness.

* * *

China's growth for the first nine months of this year was 7.6 percent, the envy of other Asian economies struggling at 3-4 percent. This growth was propelled by huge export sales and foreign investments that surged 21 percent to some $32 billion. However, there are indications the economy is slowing down. Growth in the third quarter was 7 percent, as exports fell to just 7 percent a year from the whopping 27.8 percent in 2000. The downturn was caused by the global slowdown after the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States. China's problem is that much of its growth is dependent on the recovery of the United States, its major export market, but that country is in recession now.

* * *

Some Beijing-based economists have said that achieving a 7-percent growth for China next year looks doubtful, and that in fact it could even slide down to 6 percent. Prime Minister Zhu Rongi, speaking at the Asean summit in Brunei, insisted that his country would exceed the 7 percent growth rate next year, even though he admitted that export growth could turn negative. But analysts see China's trade surplus shrinking next year to less than $5 billion from this year's $15 or $16 billion. Foreign investments could help sustain growth, but experts say there is no substitute for exports; besides, many foreign corporations were themselves hit by the global slowdown after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Anything below a 7 percent growth rate could spell trouble for the ruling party's ability to sustain the rising standard of living and continued expectations of a good life (some put the minimum at 5 percent). The economy has to generate 10 million new jobs every year to absorb the yearly addition to the labor force, but with the global slowdown this may be difficult to achieve. In addition, as CNN's FlorCruz pointed out, there are some 100 million people out in the countryside who are farming for lack of any other activity, but who are waiting to be tapped for more lucrative jobs.

Opec tries to recover magic touch

NEWS ANALYSIS

Richard Mably

VIENNA—Like a dogged gambler, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is set for one last roll of the dice in the hope of rediscovering its magic touch on oil prices.

Cartel ministers meeting this week will stretch to the limit their policy of supporting crude prices with supply curbs, by cutting output for the fourth time this year.

Battling an economic decline that is sapping demand for its oil, Opec is trying to restore confidence in the world market that it can lift prices, now near $19 for its crude, back toward a $25 target.

"Opec has been marginalized by a declining world economy and rising non-Opec supply," said consultant Gary Ross of New York's PIRA Energy. "This is their last bullet. They have to cut and then hold tight and hope for an economic recovery in the second half of 2002."

Leading Arab Opec producers like Saudi Arabia at all costs want to avoid a dangerous price collapse that would threaten further instability at a time when their region is wracked by political uncertainties after the attacks of Sept. 11. At the same time Riyadh will be wary of upsetting the United States by risking a petroleum price spike while tensions are running so high over Riyadh's role in the anti-terrorism campaign.

Opec, meeting on Wednesday, is expected to slice as much as 1.5 million barrels daily from output, extending to five million bpd, or 19 percent, the supply cuts it has made this year.

New limits to be implemented from December will leave output by the group which accounts for 60 percent of world oil trade at its lowest in 10 years.

Ministers know the sacrifice will be worthwhile if they can reverse a price collapse which until late last week had knocked $8, or 30 percent, off the value of a barrel.

They calculate there is more benefit to their export revenues from keeping prices high with volume cuts than defending market share against rising non-Opec supply at the risk of a price collapse.

Reward for the policy came in a $2-a-barrel uptick in prices at the end of last week after leading producer Saudi Arabia raised the prospect of a large 1.5 million bpd cut.

"This looked like the pre-Sept. 11 Opec—willing to take bold action to support the market," said Washington consultancy Petroleum Finance Corp.

Opec kept oil prices afloat for two years by matching supply to demand but has had the rug pulled from beneath it by the deteriorating global economic outlook.

From the consumer's perspective, one of the few consolations of a looming recession is cheaper gasoline. In the United States, low prices fuelled a startling upturn at the pumps last month with motorists burning nearly 4 percent more gasoline than during the same period last year.

And consumer countries are warning that by artificially propping up the price of crude, Opec risks inflicting further damage on a fragile world economy. "In a period when the global economy is on the brink of recession, price effects become much more significant," said Klaus Rehaag, of the International Energy Agency in Paris. "The last thing you want to do is push demand down. It is already weak enough. But that's the danger we are seeing."

Opec is hoping for some return on the huge efforts it has made in lobbying non-Opec exporters Russia, Mexico and Norway for their support in managing oil output.

Exploration and development fuelled by the Opec-engineered price boom of the past two years, growth in supplies from those countries is expected to accelerate next year.

Saudi Arabia's Ali al-Naimi, Opec's most influential minister, was in Moscow on Monday after a meeting in Madrid on Sunday with his Mexican and Venezuelan counterparts. He goes to Norway on Tuesday.

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov said on Friday that Russian companies had proposed cutting supplies and that the government would support the plan. But a senior Russian finance ministry source said the level of cuts would be "symbolic rather than substantial."

Analysts do not expect Moscow to act on the plan. "This new initiative may ultimately do little to curb Russian production. Russia has a poor track record of complying with pledged output reductions," said Petroleum Finance.

Norway has said it has no plans now to curb its oil output. Mexico, despite recognizing on Sunday in Madrid the need for action to erase surplus supply, has yet to signal its clear intention to help Opec this time. ***Reuters***

Bohol Revisited

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

WE blew into town to check three buildings that had been turned over for diocesan use by the municipality of Loay with typhoon Nanang gathering momentum in an airplane so Jurassic it could have come from the Air Force museum. It was one of those planes that looks like it utilizes electric fans to propel it. The seats were made for midgets and the mechanism had broken down so long ago it couldn't even be straightened out come landing time. Our modern hand-carried luggage didn't fit into the overhead bins! I prayed the rosary, concentrating on the Resurrection rather than on the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

How were we to know that by afternoon the typhoon signal would be upgraded to No. 3? We arrived early Tuesday morning, dumped our bags at a hotel with a lovely view of the Dauis church that in a while turned into visibility zero and took off for Baclayon to check out the museum. (It's cleaner but not much has changed. This may be due to the requirements needed before government releases legitimate funds as compared to illegitimate uses. Refer to SSS and BW.) We sloshed around in the rain, the wind blowing at 75 miles per hour, dressed for the hot, humid weather usual for Bohol.

Continuing on our way we noticed fallen trees on the road but gave it no notice since we had to get to Loay.

There is this lovely complex of three coral structures built in the 19th century. One used to be an Escuela de Niños, the other de Niñas, and the two-story structure was once the Casa Tribunal, which unlike the usual wooden second story is totally made of coral stone. The diocese envisions utilizing the smaller buildings for its archival documents and the former tribunal as an office for the staff. If possible provincial records will also be kept here.

Unfortunately, time has not been kind. The Department of Public Works and Highways, in it usual manner of fixing roads, elevated it so that the buildings now lie in a small lagoon where the rainwater settled. To make matters worse, between the Casa Tribunal and the Escuela de Niñas a concrete stage has been built, with the deleterious effect of damming more water around the foundations of the buildings. Despite the large open space still available, the local government or some civic organization recently decided to construct a tennis court right beside one of the structures and punched some holes into the walls to secure the nets. Who knows why they do these things?

Since we couldn't enter because of the lagoon, we drove on to Loboc although there was a news reports saying that the river had overflowed. Ricky insisted it was a historic moment since this only happened every 10 years or so and he wanted to photograph it for posterity. We couldn't get to the church/convent either because the townspeople had taken refuge there. (How's that for adaptive reuse? Chita theorized that it was necessary to build massive structures for temples since they served dual purposes. And here we are in presumably in the 21st century (I use the word "presumably" because we obviously are in a time warp of some sort, with an antiquated political structure dating to feudal times) and ecclesiastical buildings still serve secondary purposes.

Ricky insisted on wading through thigh-high water, followed by the architect and Richard who had never seen the wonders of Loboc, supposedly for half an hour only. Needless to say we were still waiting for them more than an hour later. Finally they reappeared out of the dark and howling mist, soaked to the skin and dripping mud and floodwater on the van's interiors. Thankfully no one caught pneumonia.

The following day we took off again. Chita kept saying the rain was letting up only to have her words hurled by the wind as visibility disappeared and gallons of water poured down on us. Since it was low tide we decided to take a chance and drive back to Loboc, where happily the flood had subsided. For the first time I noticed that some parish priest had enlarged the windows to serve as doors so that rainwater washed into the church every time the wind blew. His good intention was to bring in some light and air. It didn't occur to him apparently to provide for storm windows or doors in case of typhoons, which are a dime a dozen in this country.

By the time we returned, we couldn't reconfirm our departure the following day as flights were cancelled. News of the Camiguin disaster and the damage in Gebu were coming in. Strangely Bohol appeared to have been spared the worst, even if Chita thought the whole island was leaking including her room. Most of those marvelous churches unfortunately do have leaking roofs to the detriment of the ceiling paintings. Dauis and Panglao especially are in serious condition, but what can we do? Culture and heritage has a low priority in this country. They will of course argue that there's no money, but take a long hard look at the amount lost to graft and the number of politicians you're supporting in a style.

Now if you must get stranded some place, Bohol should be among your choices. Some time in the afternoon of Thursday while Ricky worked on his laptop and Chita slept her siesta, the rest of us took off again to see Maribojoc. One parish priest had managed to rid the church of the pulpit, two large paintings of Our Lady and Michael the Archangel, the silver tabernacle and sanctuary lamp and any number of images.

Our bedraggled group finally made it home via Cebu a day later and several pounds heavier, Boholano hospitality being what it is.

Basic feminism

YOUNGBLOOD

Michelle V. Remo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM a feminist.

Do I hear appalled reactions?

I wonder why some people would show indescribable facial expressions every time they hear the term feminist. Maybe it's because of the various stereotypes associated with the word.

Sometimes I can't help but get exasperated when people, even those who are dear to me, give wrong rationalizations for feminism. Some think that feminists are either man haters, lesbians, or contradictors: those who seem to find meaning in their lives by going against the norm, which in the case of gender is the "fact" that womyn "should" be subordinates to men.

Yes, I am a feminist, but what's the big deal? Why does it have to sound so unusual?

I can't remember how the gender issue came up while an acquaintance and I were having coffee, but I can still recall what she said about feminists. Unaware of where I stood on the issue, she said feminists were "haughty" womyn who acted so strongly against men because they "hated" the opposite sex.

On another occasion, I almost burned myself in contained anger when a stranger—a common-looking college guy I once rode a jeepney with—told his companion: "Feminist *kasi 'yang si Alma kaya palagi na lang galit sa mundo at kontra ng kontra*." How did he come up with the sweeping generalization that feminists are womyn with a grudge against the world?

And just after that bad jeepney experience, along came a long-lost friend who called and instead of compensating for my bad mood, gave me a nasty line: "You still don't have a boyfriend? Gosh, don't tell me your feminist ideology has gone full-blown, making you one of the boys and go for the same sex!"

Worse is a guy peer, who always blames the way I dress, the way I act, my afternoon-till-midnight job and almost every thing about me on my being a feminist and trace my being so to my tendency to deviate from the "norm." He suspects that I have become "eccentric," just because I don't wear "girlie" outfits and because I declined 8-5 job offers, which for him are the working hours for womyn.

These are some of the common reactions that sometimes turn my patience into disgust. And so for the benefit of those who have misconceptions about feminists, and for my own benefit, let me set things straight.

First, I don't hate men. In fact, there are many among them whom I consider to be the "loves" of my life: my brother, my dad (who recently passed away), my guy best friend, and some guy peers. And contrary to what others think, I also have my own share of "*kilig*" reactions when I watch David Duchovny do his handsome acts in haunting aliens in the "X-files" or when a hunk accidentally throws a glimpse at me.

It's about time people understood that feminists and man haters are two different things. A man hater, as the term suggests, is one who hates men for whatever reason (a failed love affair, perhaps), while a feminist believes in gender fairness and makes efforts to liberate womyn from the limited roles to which society limits them. The distinction is quite clear, so it makes me wonder sometimes why the two words are often confused. How can liberation-seeking feminists be man haters when their efforts toward equality would benefit not only themselves, but also men?

I believe men would agree that they, too, sometimes get tired of their being stereotyped, for example, as being "under the *saya*" if they succumb to their wives' requests, or "gay" if they cry, or "ungentlemanly" if they don't carry their girlfriends' light shoulder bags or if they don't give up their seats to ladyies. Besides, my professor once reported that more men die of heart attack because they suppress their sad emotions, as our culture dictates that men are not supposed to cry. Under these circumstances, gender fairness will apparently be liberating for both womyn and men.

Second, I am not a lesbian. My not having a boyfriend since birth has nothing to do with my sexuality. The reasons is simply that I haven't found Mr. Right. And I have no plans of hurrying things up just to ease the pressure from those who cannot believe I am still single.

I have lesbian friends and I respect their gender preference, but I must strongly belie the false theory about my sexuality, simply because I am not one of them. Just because I hate skirts and prefer to wear jeans to the office, it doesn't follow that I am a member of the third sex. Besides, associating clothing style with one's gender would also be stereotyping. There are lesbians who wear skirts and make-up, just as there are gay men who wear the usual male outfits.

Third, I am no contradictor. In fact, I am a peace-loving person and playing the role of the antagonist is not my style. It is true that there are cultural practices that feminists oppose, but the act is done not for the sake of contradicting, but to liberate womyn from the injustices being done against our gender. Contradictors, on the other hand, oppose things just for the heck of it. Acts such as avoiding sexist language (such as replacing the "e" in the word women with a "y"), not planning to be a plain housewife and wasting the 16 years I spent studying my ABCs, algebraic expressions, theories of mass communication; and being independent are not intended merely to go against the "norm" but simply are an exercise of freedom.

Tell me what is bizarre with womyn playing significant roles and helping their male counterparts in making the world a better place to live in and making use of our abilities as much as men do. Given the crises and the chaos that are reported daily in newspapers, it is but reasonable for womyn to go hand in hand with men in going to where the action is. If anyone sees this as something "rebellious" (and not kind and just), there must be something wrong in her or his thinking.

Knowing all this, one would therefore realize that a feminist should not be seen as someone who is "stubborn," "rebellious," "eccentric," etc. One just has to remember that womyn are humans and that every human being's right is the right of womyn as well. With this in mind, the feminists' struggle for gender fairness won't sound intimidating.

Being a feminist is really no big deal. Feminists are just people who have simple, logical and reasonable causes. The unresolved cases of rape that scare working womyn, the wife beating that goes on in some households, the sexual harassment that happens in some academic institutions, the forced domesticity of womyn that hampers their personal growth and fulfillment, and the double standard of thinking against womyn are just some of the practices feminists are fighting. These are obviously valid causes.

Now, do you still take feminists negatively? Given all the explanations of what we are, I bet you might want to be a feminist yourself.

Michelle V. Remo, 21, is a mass communications graduate of St. Scholastica's College and works as an editorial assistant in the INQUIRER.

THEY SAID

In a quandary

"I can imagine the quandary of the ICFJ. For years, it has been choosing top journalists dedicated to fighting for press freedom in various parts of the world, for training and fellowships. Then came this 76-year-old Asian woman, no longer trainable, but nominated for an award."

—Inquirer founding chair Eugenia Apostol said in a speech after receiving the Knight International Press Fellowship Lifetime Award from the International Center for Journalists

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

LETTERS

Pension for Marcos a big farce

IS this for symbolism or a farce?

Is this to demonstrate that former President Ferdinand Marcos was an authentic veteran of World War II? Records may be shown to prove this. But have we forgotten that many of his medals for his war exploits were fake, as shown by former Sorsogon Rep. Bonifacio Gillego who did a thorough research while he was in exile for many years in the United States during the dark days of the Marcos dictatorship. In his research, Gillego found out that those fake medals were awarded to Marcos when he was a senator and Senate president by generals trying to curry favor to get bigger appropriations for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Have we forgotten the human rights abuses of his regime, his plunder of the national treasury, his millions of dollar deposits in Swiss and other banks, all of which were ill-gotten?

For Imelda Marcos, the wife, to receive a veteran pension is a big farce. The P4,000 monthly old age pension is not even enough to buy her a pair of shoes from Paris. But this will buy a month's groceries for a veteran. And there are thousands of them still waiting to receive their pension.

Based on the report of the late Maj. Gen. Jose Lachica, former administrator of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, there are 38,000 applicants for old-age pension and 83,000 applications of guerrillas of World War II processed by the defunct Military Service Board of the Department of Defense.

In her greed, Imelda Marcos, who is wallowing in wealth, has denied some poor helpless authentic veterans of World War II what is due them.—**COL. JOSE RAMIRO (ret.), 79 Kamuning Road, Quezon City**

NEXT TIME...TRY RECYCLING!
NEXT TIME...TRY RECYCLING!
GREENPEACE

Simple ways of recycling plastic products

I AM not a writer, I simply want to present one simple lesson that I learned from my 12-month stay in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

As most of us may already know, two of the many possible solutions to a country's garbage problem are reduction of waste at source and reuse of resources. Again, most of us know from experience that packaging materials, like plastic bags and packages, are often just thrown away after use although the are non-degradable. To address this problem, supermarkets in the Netherlands sell the shopping bags (instead of giving them away for free) to encourage their reuse and eventually reduce waste.

To be honest, I was initially shocked to learn that a First World country would adopt such a simple and probably "*baduy*" practice as a way of reducing plastic waste. But we already experience such practice at (Pilipinas) Makro, which is a successful Dutch supermarket chain.

Besides the reuse of plastic bag, the use of "*bayong*" made from *sako ng bigas* is also very common among the Dutch. Such *bayongs* can be bought from supermarkets, or are given for free by suppliers such as 7-Up. (I brought mine home all the way from the Netherlands so I can continue the practice here.)

Such practice may not totally solve our country's garbage problem but I certainly hope it will prevent the problem from getting worse. To successfully implement it, Philippines will need constant publicity to educate and to solicit collective support and the cooperation of the general public.

I hope the government and our people will find this suggestion workable.—**JOY LIM-ABBU, joyabbu@hotmail.com**

How to convene a real economic summit

THE CONVENING of a national economic summit on Nov. 26 is an acknowledgment by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that the economy is indeed a sorry mess. The column of Amando Doronila last Nov. 9 enumerates those who were invited to the summit: "political parties, leaders of Congress, the private business sector, the NGOs, the trade unions, the peasant organizations and civil society."

Since this is a summit on the economy, it is but logical that the principal participants ought to be economists. Respected economists holding various persuasions of economic thought should be invited, too, including the nationalist economists. This way, all possible positions and issues affecting the economy can be presented and debated. Let the best minds of every school of economic thought be there. Let mind compete against mind as free traders and globalists tangle with the nationalists who stand for protectionism and industrialization. Let it be a real summit like what happened recently in Beijing where US President George Bush and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed took different sides on the issue of free trade/globalization.

The nationalist voice, which Alejandro Lichauco, Emmanuel Yap and Amado Gat Inciong can articulate, and whose economic views run diametrically opposite to those of the economic managers of the President ought therefore also to be heard. Else, it won't be real summit. It might even degenerate into some of kind of a mutual admiration club.—**RUBEN M. ORTEZA, Quezon City**

Garchitorena unflinching in his decisions

I HAVE received a lot of calls from mutual friends and acquaintances of Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena and me, concerning his widely publicized exchange of words with Justice Anacleto Badoy and his controversial decision on the legality of prosecution evidence presented against former President Joseph Estrada in the perjury case.

Heaven knows and I know, based on previous and much bigger opportunities for secret financial gain which may not even be considered bribery, that Garchitorena stood firm in upholding his personal and judicial integrity. His "just-*tipid*" and "just-*tiis*" lifestyle since childhood are solid evidence on his behalf.

What is "defective" in the eyes of the unknowing and quick-to-judge public critics of his, is that Garchitorena sticks to his judicial opinions and decisions even if friends and allies vehemently disagree. His Bicol-Castillian temperament and slashing articulateness whether in English, Spanish, Filipino and classic or common Bicol, make his "defect" look even worse. I know how painfully slashing these could be, perhaps even more painful than the worst of my friend Larry Henares' pen and tongue-lashing.

I remember that during the Aquino administration, Garchitorena lamented a number of times in the presence of his intimate friends that he had to remind top government officials that they could not and should not expect him to be a "remedial judge" for the government or the Presidential Commission on Good Government. For even then he was adamant that despite his personal knowledge or opinion of the guilt of Marcos administration-related respondents in his court, he had to stick within the limits of "the applicable laws and valid evidence properly presented in court."

Heaven knows, too, that Justice Francis Garchitorena is not infallible or impeccable. Thus, let us give the Supreme Court a chance to rule on the appeals or complaints against his decision on the perjury case against Estrada and on the administrative controversy with Justice Badoy.—**EDUARDO B. OLAGUER, 10/F Aurora Milestone Bldg., 1045 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City**

Civil society's role in local governance ignored

THIS is in response to the speech delivered by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo before the First Local Governance Congress on Oct. 10, 2001 at the Manila Midtown Hotel on the occasion of the 10th year since the passage of the Local Government Code. Some 2,000 delegates coming from the local government units, civil society organizations, private vector and business, donor agencies and national agencies attended the two-day event.

The Local Government Code was hailed as one of the most progressive legislative reforms since 1986. In the last 10 years, civil society organizations have increasingly worked together with the local government units toward increased participation and consensus building in local governance.

However, more than a hundred participants from civil society organizations describe as disturbing the President's stance on local governance.

The President's commitment to local governance forms a crucial part in setting the direction of the next decade of local autonomy. Her presence in the First Local Governance Congress was seen as a step toward strengthening this partnership. However, the acknowledgement of this partnership and civil society's pivotal role in local governance was conspicuously missing from her speech. Neither was there any mention of civil society's presence in the assembly.

The omission was a disturbing development for civil society advocates present and prompted important questions to be raised. Was the omission a case of mere oversight or neglect on the part of the presidential advisers who drafted the speech? Or was it a reflection of the shortsightedness of the Office of the President on the role of civil society and consequently on the value of local autonomy?

The disappointment of civil society organizations did not spring from cynicism but from a valid demand for recognition as a partner in local governance. We would like to give credit to the administrative for its initial efforts on local governance. What we find ironic was that while the DILG and ULAP recognized civil society's role throughout the preparation of the program, the Office of the President didn't seem to be listening.

This incident also is ironic because the President's ascension to power was the outcome of a strong civil society movement, backed by state institutions.

If such a commitment and recognition are not forthcoming, we in the civil society must get our act together and show that we are determined to make the government recognize us as partners.

We remain undaunted in reiterating our commitment to promote a proper understanding and appreciation of the strategic role of civil society as partners of the people in governance until a more vigorous and productive participation in local governance is achieved.—**KISSY SUMAYLO, JESUS VICENTE GARAGANERA and the member organizations of the Civil Society Conference Steering Committee: Phildhrra; Saligan; IPG; PRRM; EBJF; PBSP; Kalsahan**

Bring coco levy case to a happy end

WE in the Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (Pakisama) join the National Federation of Small Coconut Farmers Organization (NFSCFO) in asking President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to issue a new executive order that will recover the coconut levy funds and create a perpetual public trust fund for the benefit of the small coconut farmers and farmworkers (SCFFWs) and the coconut industry.

We warmly welcomed President Macapagal's move earlier this year to revoke EO 313 issued by then President Joseph Estrada in November last year. This EO clearly favored Eduardo Cojuangco and the Cocofed, and their stand that the funds are private in nature.

We have also submitted to the President, together with the Coconut Industry Reform Movement (COIR) and other groups our proposed draft of the new EO. We hope the President will act on this matter soon. This could be an early Christmas gift to the millions of poor coconut farmers and farmworkers.

Finally, we are surprised that your report stated that Cojuangco "had voiced willingness to honor a stalled agreement with the Estrada administration in which he would surrender the '27 percent CIIF-SMC shares.'" Cojuangco has repeatedly said that he does not claim this portion of the SMC shares, and that he acknowledges that this belongs to the coconut farmers. (He claims a separate 20 percent of SMC shares which are likewise suspected of having been acquired through the coconut levy funds and are now also sequestered.)

How can Cojuangco not "surrender" something he acknowledges is not his in the first place?—**ANANIAS F. LOZA, president, Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka, Rm. 202, Partnership Center, 59 C. Salvador St., Loyola Heights, 1108, Quezon City**

Hopelessly 'trying hard'

SENATOR Aquilino Pimentel's tirade against his colleagues in Congress speaks well of the kind of public servant that he is. Short of casting aspersion on his colleagues, he nonetheless criticized them for asking that they be addressed as "Honorable."

I would consider Senator Pimentel neither unpredictable nor a maverick but he is surely one who is hopelessly "trying hard."

After lapses in his pronouncements and his seemingly unbridled political moves, nobody really cares anymore.—**ANTONIO A. CRUZADO, 17 T. Valencia St., North Suzana Exec. Village, Quezon City**

Pissed

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

LAST Oct. 3 I wrote an article about the plan of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) to require drug testing for drivers' licenses. The requirement, which involves testing of urine, went into effect on Oct. 29, and has stirred some debate, but not enough, I'm afraid, to stop its implementation.

The piss tests are, literally, a national piss-off. I predicted in my article that the testing would breed more corruption at the LTO and—voila—no less than the agency's chief admitted recently, on the television talk show "Pointblank," that there were already reports of fake drug test certificates on the very first day of the mandatory testing. Give the tests a few more weeks and I'm sure we will find all kinds of other scams, including people who will take the test for you—literally pee-for-a-fee fixers.

I'm pissed, too, with the way the costs of this sham are being passed on to hapless motorists. All applicants for licenses—student, non-professional or professional—must pay P300 to be tested. For many of the applicants, that's more than a day's wages. Not only that, if the applicant is found positive with this initial screening test, a second confirmatory test is conducted, costing P600, again to be shouldered by the applicant.

In my previous column, I discussed the many technical limitations of drug testing. I will summarize the more important ones here. The reason some people will have to take two tests is that the initial screening sometimes has "false positive" results, meaning the applicant may not have taken prohibited drugs but still tests positive because of medicines he or she took. For example, many common cold remedies contain substances similar to shabu and can give a false positive result during the initial screening. Adding insult to injury, it is the poor applicant who has to pay P600 for a second test to clear himself or herself.

All this is made even more outrageous by the fact that the tests, both initial and confirmatory, cannot detect drug use within a few days after last use. The tests look for the forbidden drugs' metabolites or by-products and these drop to undetectable levels within one to three days after the last use for shabu, and within three days to a month with marijuana.

Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez admitted, on "Pointblank," that no other country in the world make mandatory drug testing for the issuance of licenses but went on to boast that the Pinoy is different and that we could set the example for other countries. I doubt it. No other country requires drug testing for drivers' licenses because their officials know their medical facts.

Mind you, there is a place for drug testing. If we want to be scientific about this, then we could explore possibilities of testing drivers for drugs, including alcohol, right after a road accident happens. In fact, we might want to extend this drug testing to other situations as well, such as after a murder. We keep reading about drugs being involved when heinous crimes are committed, but "evidence" of drug use is always based on the suspects' own testimony. I've always felt that many of the suspects will claim they were on drugs because this becomes an alibi, a way to argue they were not responsible for their actions.

Again, let me reiterate, because this point seems to have been lost in all the discussions: the detection time for these tests is limited, so that if a suspect is apprehended several days after an offense, drug testing will be useless because there will be no residues left to detect. This applies especially to alcohol, which is excreted from the body within a few hours after the last drink.

We need to be very clear about the legal implications of the test results. Do we even have a law, for example, that prohibits driving under the influence of drugs? Which drugs are covered? Is alcohol included?

We also need to ask how these laws can be implemented without leading to more corruption and abuse. For example, I worry that if we allow our police to conduct alcohol breath analysis we might end up giving them another weapon for *hulidap* or extortion.

The drug testing laboratories and the LTO are the only ones that stand to gain from this latest government fiasco. With three million people applying each year for drivers' licenses, drug testing is now a billion-peso industry. And while the LTO wastes everyone's time and money with drug testing, we will continue to have hundreds and thousands of motorists obtaining their licenses this year without being tested on their knowledge of basic traffic rules and regulations. Not that such tests would make that much of a difference either because out on our roads, the rules aren't enforced anyway. It's government incompetence and corruption—not drugs—that kill and maim people on the road.

* * *

Erratum: Last week I gave the web address of a site that reviews urban legends and rumors. It should be www.snopes2.com, not "snoops2."

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Send a career diplomat to Beijing post

IT is high time the government considered seriously the appointment of career officials to foreign posts, especially the more sensitive ones.

A case in point is the impending appointment of a Philippine consul to China. The business community is hoping that Malacañang will not take the appointment of a Philippine consul to China lightly. China, which has joined the global economic mainstream with its membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), is emerging as the country's major trading partner. The business potentials of China in the booming Asia-Pacific region have yet to be fully explored.

Given these scenarios, we in the business community strongly feel that the Philippine consulate in China should be run by a career diplomat, preferably from the China Division, ASPAC, DFA, who has vast experience in RP-China relations. So much is at stake that we can't afford to compromise on the qualifications of the appointee.—**JIMMY C.H. PO, president and CEO, Globus Group of Companies, Excelland System I, Congressional Ave., Bgy. Bahay Turo, Proj. 8, Quezon City**

Why doesn't Erap trust RP doctors?

THE PAST week saw several articles, opinions and commentaries regarding former President Estrada's arthritic knees. There was even a statement from a US-based doctor that some equipment and facilities are not available in the Philippines so that Erap will need to go to the United States for his treatment.

As a practicing orthopedic surgeon, I feel I should react and clarify that the treatment being referred to is a total knee replacement. This procedure has been done in our country since the late 1970s. Several government as well as private institutions are equipped to do it.

There is an organization of subspecialist orthopedic doctors interested in the treatment of arthritic hip and knees and our registry show that 300 cases of total joint replacements are being done on a yearly basis as far north as Baguio and as far south as Davao. In Metro Manila where this procedure is more common, there is no lack of equipment nor is there a lack of implants needed to do this procedure. Rehabilitation protocols follow closely US models, so that success rates are comparable to centers abroad. As to doctors, the Philippine Orthopedic Association has a roster of very qualified hip and knee surgeons who will be more than willing to take his case.

I hope this issue can be put to rest. Like cataract surgery, it is commonplace and can be done here without a doubt. In this case, the issue is one of personal choice. I cite Sen. Loi Estrada who said, "We may have the best doctors but if the patient is not at ease with them or does not have faith in them, the treatment would not be effective."

So why does Estrada not trust the doctors here?—**ALBERT DY JR., MD, FPOA, vice president, Philippine Hip and Knee Society, Department of Orthopedic Surgery, UP-PGH Taft Avenue, Manila**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets; City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. ,897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

AFP

A NORTHERN Alliance soldier prays during a lull in shelling Taliban positions at the Kalakata mountains in northern Afghanistan Nov. 11. Opposition forces are driving south from their new stronghold in northern Afghanistan in a major push to link up with their frontlines outside Kabul.

Arab, Muslim leaders resigned to US raids during Ramadan month

CAIRO—Leaders of Arab and Muslim countries appear resigned to continued US raids on Afghanistan during the sacred holiday of Ramadan, with history showing that the Muslim fasting month has rarely stopped wars in the Islamic world.

Arab leaders have lobbied, with no success, for Washington to halt its strikes on Afghanistan during the coming holy month, despite growing public anger toward the US-managed war.

Jordan, a key US ally, hinted there is no solution other than to tolerate continued strikes on Afghanistan's fundamentalist Taliban regime and guest Osama bin Laden, the alleged mastermind behind the Sept. 11 terror attacks on New York and Washington.

Jordan's King Abdullah II said last week in London that the military offensive against the Taliban should end as soon as possible, but implied his grudging acceptance of the war raging during Ramadan.

Ramadan is the ninth month in Islam's lunar calendar when Muslims believe God revealed the holy Koran to the Prophet Mohammad, and one of the five pillars of Islam.

The holiday is set to start by next Friday or Saturday night with the rise of the full moon.

The Voice of America this month started broadcasting a US government message saying there would be no letup in the military action on Afghanistan, recalling that, in the past, Muslims have never stopped their own wars for the holiday.

Recent history provides many examples of battles fought during Ramadan: the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the 1975-1990 Lebanese civil war, and the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

Voices of discontent have risen in some Islamic countries, particularly key US ally Pakistan, and Shiite Muslim Iran, longtime foe of both the Sunni Muslim Taliban and Washington.

On a visit to London, Pakistan's military leader Pervez Musharraf reiterated his plea Thursday that the military operation in Afghanistan "comes to an end . . . as swiftly as possible before the month of Ramadan."

The Pakistani government has had to squash popular protest over its support of the US military intervention in neighboring Afghanistan and fears the anti-US demonstrations could gain momentum with Ramadan.

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami said the military campaign risked stirring intolerance and violence in the region and around the world. *AFP*

3 journalists killed on Afghan frontlines

SUTTON

SHATARAI, Afghanistan—Three journalists accompanying opposition forces were killed in an ambush by the Taliban Islamic militia in northeastern Afghanistan, an AFP correspondent said Monday.

The bodies of French radio reporter Pierre Billaud working with RTL along with that of a German photographer were recovered from the frontlines at Shatarai close to the border with Tajikistan.

Opposition forces took them back to their post Monday morning after Sunday's ambush in which woman journalist, Johanne Sutton, from the French radio station Radio France Internationale (RFI), was also killed.

The identity of the German photographer has not been released yet as his family has yet to be informed.

They are said to be the first media casualties since the US-led attacks in Afghanistan that began on Oct. 7.

A Canadian journalist with the Montreal Gazette, a German photographer and another French radio journalist, who were also on the tank, escaped unhurt.

"We were caught up in a regular ambush, a rocket attack. Some among us fell off the tank, which was going very fast and continued on its way," said Veronique Rebeyrotte of France Culture.

According to other journalists the bodies of all three victims were riddled with bullets.

Violent fighting has been going on in Takhar province for the past few days, but the Taliban has denied an opposition claim to have seized the provincial capital, Taloqan.

The opposition now hold Faryab, Jauzjan, Balkh, Samangan, Takhar and Badakhshan border provinces across the north of the country following a stunning series of victories backed by US air power since Friday. *AFP*

Powell: Bin Laden not likely to have nuke arms

WASHINGTON—US Secretary of State Colin Powell dismissed Osama bin Laden's claims that he has nuclear weapons and might use them as a "wild boast and threat" and said America would not use nuclear force against him.

But Powell, speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press," said he had no idea whether the man accused in the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States possessed chemical or biological weapons.

"I have no way of knowing, but I think it's unlikely that he has any nuclear weapons," Powell said on the morning talk show, calling the assertion, "a wild boast and threat."

"I can't say about chemical and biological. But this is the kind of threat that this evil person likes to toss around."

On Saturday, the Pakistani newspaper Dawn carried an interview with Bin Laden in which the head of the al-Qaida network said he had obtained nuclear and chemical weapons and reserved the right to use them if the United States did first.

Powell scoffed at the possibility the United States might attack Bin Laden with nuclear force. "Against what? Against whom?" would the United States attack, Powell asked.

"President (Bush) has every option available to him, but it's a stretch of my imagination that we would ever use those kinds of (nuclear) options," Powell said.

Powell said the latest statements from Bin Laden "should be a wake-up call to Muslims around the world . . . that this is not a man of faith, this is a man of evil."

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told CBS's "Face the Nation" it was unlikely Bin Laden has nuclear capabilities, but that chemical weapons were a possibility.

"It doesn't take a real wild guess to assume that they either have chemical or biological or that they may have or will have at some point in the future," Rumsfeld said. "I think it's unlikely that they have a nuclear weapon, but on the other hand, with the determination they have, they may very well."

Rumsfeld said US forces had bombed some sites in Afghanistan where Bin Laden could have had chemical weapons.

"We have bombed some of them," he said. "We don't know where all of them are."

WAR without borders

White House national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said there was "no credible evidence" Bin Laden had nuclear arms but that the United States was working to ensure he does not acquire weapons of mass destruction.

"We believe that we have a very, very aggressive program under way to make certain that he does not acquire them," Rice told ABC's "This Week."

Bin Laden is suspected of masterminding the attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York and damaged the Pentagon in Washington, killing more than 4,600 people.

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, a key ally in the US-led war on terrorism, cautioned the United States and others from using nuclear weapons on Bin Laden.

"It would be most terrible if he initiated it . . . (but) it would be more terrible if we responded in kind," he said.

The United States has been bombing Afghanistan for more than a month in a bid to oust the country's Taliban rulers, who are believed to be sheltering Bin Laden.

Musharraf dismissed fears that his own nuclear arms could be at risk or that he might find it hard to cling to power in the face of domestic opposition to the war in Afghanistan.

"There is no doubt in my mind that the (Pakistani) Army cannot be sabotaged at all and the vast majority of Pakistanis are with me. I am very confident," he said.

The Washington Post reported on Sunday that Musharraf ordered an emergency redeployment of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal to secret new locations and reorganized military oversight of the bombs to protect the weapons from theft or attack.

On Saturday, US President George W. Bush warned nations that the threat of global terrorism may soon include nuclear weapons and urged them to intensify their support for the US-led war on terrorism. Bush told the UN General Assembly those responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks were planning more strikes, which could hit any country. *Reuters*

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2 survive 6 months adrift on Pacific

SYDNEY—Two fishermen survived almost six months adrift on the Pacific Ocean in a small metal boat by catching fish and birds and drinking rainwater, one of the survivors and a doctor said Monday.

Two other men died during the torrid journey, which saw them drift nearly 4,000 km west from Western Samoa to Papua New Guinea.

Dr. Barry Kirby from Alotau Hospital in eastern Papua New Guinea said Lafaili Tofi, 36, and Telea Pa'a, 27, were extremely lucky to be alive.

"Basically they survived on the rainwater they got while they were drifting, some small fish which they caught and also some birds which landed on the . . . vessel," Kirby said in a telephone interview.

The men were fishing off their native Western Samoa on June 20 when a huge load of fish dragged their seven-meter aluminum boat under water.

The men righted the boat by cutting away the fishing lines and two outboard motors but were left powerless as currents pushed them out into open ocean, Kirby said.

The survivors were finally rescued last Tuesday by a villager on Normanby Island in Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea, who paddled out to them after they fired off their last flare.

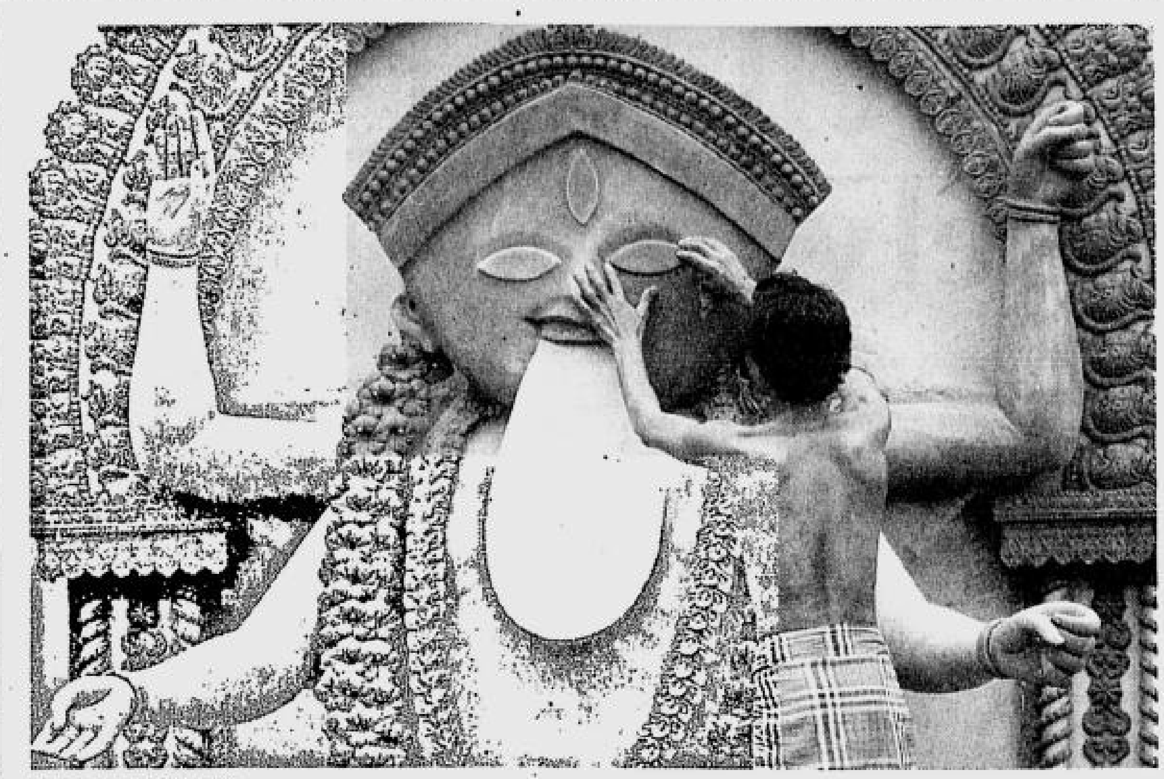
"I don't know how they missed all the islands (between Samoa and Papua New Guinea). They were apparently pretty close to Fiji and they had some flares on board which they set off, but nobody came out to rescue (them)," Kirby added.

He said the men also saw several ships pass by but none came to their rescue.

The men's boat was well built, he added.

"I think that's the thing that saved them. It had some flotation tanks in the hulls . . . and it had a canopy on it, but it was all weathered away," Kirby said. *AP*

Bush edges Gore under Florida review



KALI FACELIFT AFP

An artisan puts the finishing touches on a clay statue of the Hindu goddess of destruction, Kali, Nov. 11 in Calcutta. Known as "Kumartoli," the artisans are working day and night to refurbish thousands of Kali idols, which will be worshipped during this week's Diwali, the festival of light.

WASHINGTON—Republican George W. Bush would likely have defeated Democrat Al Gore in Florida in the November 2000 presidential elections if either of two limited recounts had been completed, according to an exhaustive review of the ballots commissioned by leading US newspapers.

Gore, however, could have narrowly defeated Bush if contested ballots in the whole state had been counted, according to a ten-month study conducted by a consortium of news organizations and assisted by professional statisticians.

After weeks of angry charges and lawsuits over the fate of disputed presidential votes following the Nov. 7 presidential balloting in the crucial state of Florida, on Dec. 9 the United States Supreme Court ruled in a 5-to-4 vote that a statewide recount under varying standards threatened "irreparable harm" to Bush.

The move essentially granted Bush a national victory because Florida election officials had earlier certified Bush as the state winner—a move disputed by Gore—which gave Bush enough electoral votes to win the presidency.

Gore supporters have long held their candidate would have won if the two limited vote recounts had proceeded, and that the US Supreme Court essentially appointed Bush to the presidency.

For the White House, the issue was ancient history.

"The American people have moved on," spokesperson Nicolle Devenish said late Sunday. "This latest media recount was an undertaking that turned up additional inconclusive data. The election was settled last year and the American people moved on a long time ago."

Gore also had little to say.

"We are a nation of laws, and the presidential election of 2000 is over," Gore said in a written statement.

"Right now our country faces a great challenge as we seek to successfully combat terrorism. I fully support President Bush's efforts to achieve that goal."

"In the end, I suppose you should say it was almost a tie, or essentially a tie," said his running mate, US Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut.

"In some senses we may never know exactly who won Florida," Lieberman said Sunday. "But we've moved on."

Another principal player in the vote-count drama, Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris—who certified Bush's state victory and moved to block the vote recount—said the ballot review proves Bush would have been elected under rules that were set by Florida's courts. *AFP*

Britain to detain terrorism suspects without trial

LONDON—Britain will declare a "state of public emergency" on Monday as the government seeks powers to detain indefinitely without trial foreigners suspected of terrorism.

Home Secretary (Interior Minister) David Blunkett will put forward an order before parliament declaring that events following the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States are threatening the life of the nation.

Under the proposed legislation, suspects can be held for six months in high-security jails until their case is reviewed by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission, headed by a supreme court judge. The case could then be reviewed every six months.

The move, which will invoke a clause in European law that allows parts of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Britain is a signatory, to be set aside in time of public emergency, is sure to spark heated debate.

Blunkett insisted on Sunday that the legislation would not be an abuse of civil liberties, but human rights advocates have decried the moves.

"We can live in a world with airy-fairy civil liberties and believe the best in everybody—and then they destroy us. that's not the world we live in," Blunkett told London Weekend Television on Sunday.

Civil rights group Liberty said they would challenge the move in court. "This is a fundamental violation of the rule of law, our rights and the traditional British values," Liberty director John Wadham said.

Current British human rights laws effectively mean that foreigners suspected of crimes abroad cannot be detained if there is no immediate prospect of being sent back to their country of origin.

Blunkett said the emergency legislation was needed to enable Britain to detain terrorist suspects who are nationals of countries which have no extradition treaty with Britain or of countries which might mistreat or kill the suspect if he were returned there.

A government official said that as many as 15-20 people could be detained once the new legislation comes into effect sometime next month.

Libertarians said improved intelligence and security systems could have prevented the Sept. 11 attacks, and there was no need for draconian legislation.

Britain's crackdown on terrorism follows intelligence reports that a number of people connected with the US attacks have passed through or even lived in Britain. *Reuters*

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OVER one thousand new recruits of the guerrilla movement Hezbollah listen to a speech by their leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah during a ceremony in Beirut Nov. 11 to honor the group's first suicide attack on occupying Israeli troops in 1982.
REUTERS

Syria insists Hezbollah not a terrorist movement

UNITED NATIONS—Syria and the United States disagreed on Sunday on the status of the Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah, with Syria arguing it should not qualify as a "terrorist organization," a US official said.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell told Syrian Farouq al-Shara that despite the disagreement the United States wanted Syria to use its influence over Hezbollah to reduce conflict with Israel, the senior state department official said.

They met at Powell's New York hotel on the sidelines of the annual gathering for the UN General Assembly session.

"It was a pretty frank exchange of views back and forth. The Syrians basically argued the distinction between Hezbollah and terrorism," he told reporters at a briefing.

"The secretary said we need to stop the violence; we need you to help stop the violence," he added.

The Syrian and Lebanese government say Hezbollah should not be on the US list of "foreign terrorist organizations" because it confines its military activities to attacking Israeli forces in occupied Arab territory.

The United States says that in the past it has also attacked civilians, including US diplomats in the 1980s.

The long-standing disagreement has come to the surface again because the United States, in its zeal to wage war on what it calls terrorism, has put Hezbollah and several Palestinian groups on a new list of groups subject to strict financial controls, including sanctions against foreign banks, which do not freeze their assets.

The government in Lebanon, where Hezbollah is a respectable mainstream political movement, has rejected a US demand that it take steps against Hezbollah accounts.

The Lebanese refusal was the first open defiance of Washington's attempt to make other governments toe the line on its war against "terrorist organizations of global reach."

The state department official said: "There was a lot of this discussion about what is terrorism and freedom fighters and things like that. The secretary was quite clear. We look to the Syrians to take action and especially with Hezbollah."

Powell and Shara also talked about US attempts to change the system of UN sanctions against Iraq.

"They also discussed our desire to move forward with a new Iraqi resolution, though they didn't go into too much more detail," the US official said.

On his first foreign trip in February, Powell thought he had an assurance from Syrian President Bashar al-Assad that Syria would put an oil pipeline from Iraq under UN auspices, but this never came to pass. *Reuters*

Israel tortures prisoners, say rights groups

JERUSALEM—Israel has resumed systematic torture of Palestinian detainees even though the Israeli Supreme Court banned the practice two years ago, three local and international human rights groups said in a joint report Sunday.

The document cited affidavits from detainees, including a 16-year-old who said he was soaked in freezing water, made to carry a heavy wooden beam while manacled and then beaten.

Israel says that the ban on torture is still in effect and that alleged violations are being investigated. Israel has said that sometimes, security forces need to extract information quickly from suspects who may have knowledge of an impending attack.

An Israeli government report on the issue and the response by the human rights groups will be submitted to an 11-day meeting of the UN Committee Against Torture in Geneva, due to begin Monday.

Copies of both were obtained by The Associated Press.

The joint document by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, or PCATI, the Palestinian rights group LAW and the Swiss-based World Organization Against Torture contends that the September 1999 High Court ruling has been regularly flouted, particularly since the outbreak of fighting between Israelis and Palestinians over a year ago.

"Torture and other forms of ill-treatment are still widely used against Palestinian detainees, both in GSS (General Security Service) interrogation facilities and by members of the Israeli Army and Police," it says. The GSS is also known by its Hebrew acronym as Shin Bet.

The report cites nine affidavits by Arab detainees saying they were interrogated with methods expressly forbidden under the 1999 ruling or by existing Israeli or international law. Overall, the groups say they have received about 20 reports of violations since the ruling was passed.

Among these are sleep deprivation, shackling a prisoner to a chair in painful positions for prolonged periods, use of smelly hoods, the playing of deafening sounds and beating, slapping and kicking.

"They ordered me to go outside, despite the freezing cold," said 16-year-old Rami Zaul, interrogated in October and November 2000.

"One of them grabbed my shirt and poured cold water on me. Afterwards he forced me to undress and I remained in my short-sleeved shirt and they continued to pour freezing water on my head," Zaul said in an affidavit.

Zaul said he was then forced, while handcuffed, to drag a wooden beam with one of his interrogators standing on it. "When I got tired and dropped it I was beaten hard," he said.

Zaul says in the affidavit that he was accused of preparing firebombs and of throwing stones at Israelis. Rights workers documenting his case say they do not know if he has yet been released. *AP*

Yugoslav admiral yields to UN war crimes tribunal

BELGRADE—A retired Yugoslav Navy admiral on Monday flew to the Netherlands to surrender to the UN war crimes tribunal to face charges for an assault on the medieval Croatian city of Dubrovnik in 1991.

Miodrag Jokic, 66, told reporters that this "was a difficult decision for me and my family, but being a soldier it was only fair and just."

Jokic and three other senior officers were charged with destroying much of the ancient port town of Dubrovnik during the Croatian war in 1991.

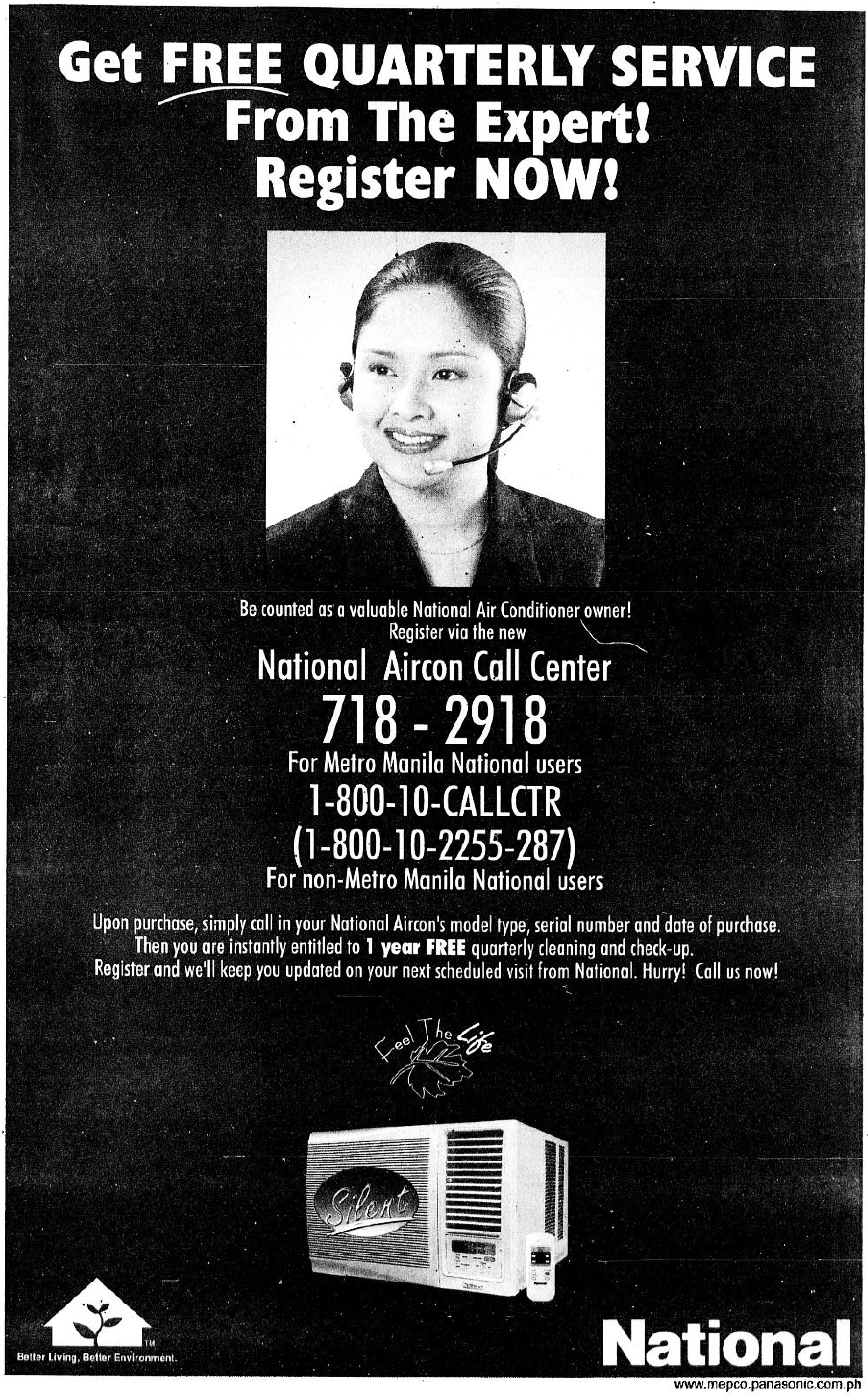
Retired Gen. Pavle Strugar, 68, was the first of the four officers to surrender in late October. They were indicted for suspected murder, plunder and the destruction of nearly 70 percent of Dubrovnik in an attempt to incorporate the 17th-century town into Serbia, the dominant Yugoslav republic.

The artillery siege began after Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, setting off a decade of wars in the Balkans. During the months-long siege, about 1,000 artillery shells rained on the ancient town from the hills of Montenegro and from naval ships in the Adriatic. At least 43 civilians were killed.

From the sea, the assault was led by Jokic and his right-hand man, Adm. Milan Zec, both Montenegrins. Zec, who is among the four men indicted, later became commander of the Yugoslav Navy. He was relieved of duty last year by Yugoslavia's new president, Vojislav Kostunica.

Accompanying Jokic on the plane that took off at 8:15 a.m. were his wife Stanka and daughter Sanja. Jokic said that his decision was all the more important because it comes at a moment when "others are trying to block cooperation with The Hague tribunal."

"I have nothing to be ashamed of. As an admiral, I performed my duties professionally and conscientiously . . . I stand by my acts today. They fall within the responsibility of a soldier. I hope my country will stand by me," Jokic said. *AP*



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COA questions ₱124M Chavit advances

BY LEONCIO BALBIN JR.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN CITY—Former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson left the post he held for nearly three decades with some questionable financial transactions shown by several Commission on Audit reports prepared by slain Ilocos Sur auditor Agustin Chan Jr.

Among these questionable transactions is a P124-million cash advance. Based on a July 31, 2001 list of provincial officials and employees with cash advances, Singson left behind P124,784,818.17 in unliquidated cash advances.

Singson admitted incurring the cash advances but said P100 million of them was given to the National Tobacco Administration (NTA).

"It is on record that P100 million went to the NTA," Singson told the INQUIRER by telephone on Monday.

However, he did not say where the remaining P24.7 million in unliquidated funds went.

A COA audit report for 2000 prepared by Chan also found that the provincial government under Singson lost P9.5 million that represented payment for a unit of backhoe that was not delivered.

Records showed that the provincial government entered into a contract with the Compressed Air Machineries and Equipment Corp. for the purchase of a brand new JCB 4CX backhoe loader.

Provincial officials told COA that there was an actual delivery but the equipment was returned due to defects detected during inspection.

The officials assured COA auditors that they would institute all legal remedies to retrieve the equipment from the supplier.

Singson said the backhoe was delivered to the province but it was taken from the province's possession as this would be used for a "contest."

"*Mayroong* backhoe *pero kinuha uli dahil para sa* contest (The backhoe was delivered but it was pulled out for a contest)," he said, without elaborating.

Singson also said the money for the backhoe came from a "congressional fund" but did not identify the source.

However, the INQUIRER obtained a copy of Resolution No. 23 of the provincial board that showed that it allocated P11.5 million for the purchase of a backhoe.

On Monday, officials and employees of the provincial auditor's office and members of the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance commemorated the 40th day of the death of Chan and his driver Alex Ragacho in a Mass held at the St. Paul Cathedral here.

"As we commemorate the 40th day of the ambush killing of lawyer Agustin Chan and his driver, we are saddened by the realization that if only the national government had looked into the anomalies that happened in Ilocos Sur and acted on them, we might still be enjoying his company today," Nestor Segismundo, Sisa president, told the INQUIRER.

"We appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo that if they cannot put the perpetrators to the bar of justice, she should give meaning to the death of Attorney Chan by filing charges against the corrupt officials of Ilocos Sur."

Acting provincial auditor Elvira Felix did not hide her dismay over the "snail-paced investigation" of Chan's murder.

"Forty days had passed and still they have no concrete results," she said.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon and Southern Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 23°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 20°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 21°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 26°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/11/13/01

ROUNDUP

PDI man wins award

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—INQUIRER correspondent for Nueva Ecija Anselmo Roque won the 2001 Professional Media Award (print category) of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (Pcarrd). His third since 1997, Roque received the award during Pcarrd's 29th anniversary celebration on Friday at the Manila Hotel. Roque won the awards for his published stories on research breakthroughs.
PDI Central Luzon Desk

Jueteng men cover

SAMPALOC, Quezon—Mayor Samson Delgado yesterday said jueteng bet collectors here have resorted to disguising as fish vendors to continue operations in his town. Delgado said police arrested last week several jueteng bet takers disguised as "ambulant fish vendors." Sources said the collectors work for partners "Fanny" and "Boggie" from Mauban town.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Appeal for quarrying

SAMPALOC, Quezon—Mayor Samson Delgado has appealed to the Provincial Mining and Regulatory Board to allow the municipal government to quarry the river here for gravel. "It would save us millions of pesos for our infrastructure projects. Our river also needs regular dredging to avoid flashfloods," Delgado said. The gravel would not be sold and would be used only by the municipal government. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Trader, robber killed

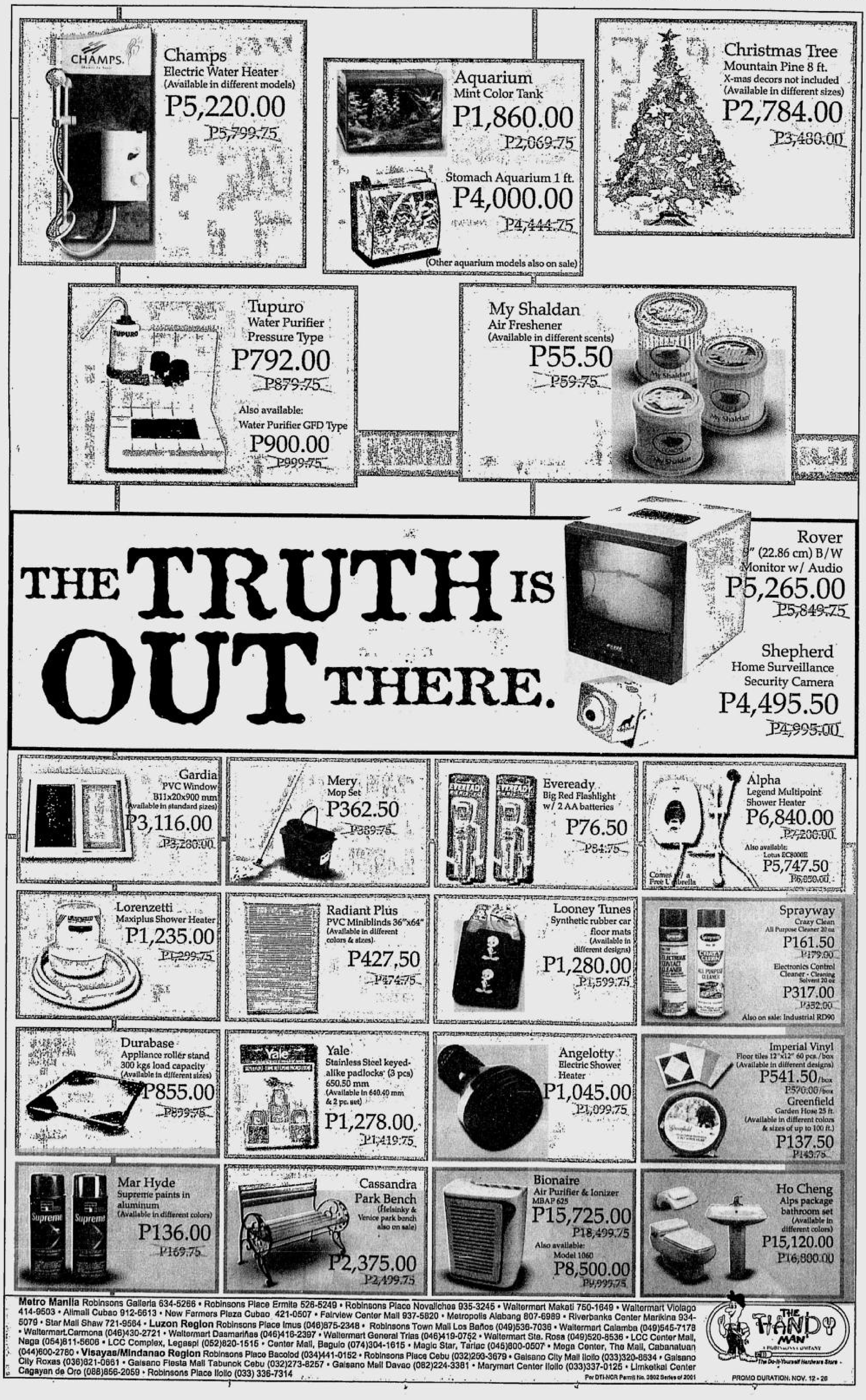
LEMERY, Batangas—A businessman and one of four unidentified men who robbed him of P7.2 million died of bullet wounds Wednesday. The robbery took place in front of the residence of Celso Aquino, 58, in Barangay Palanas here. Police said the four suspects emerged from nowhere and opened fire at the victim. Aquino fired back with his 9mm pistol, hitting one of the suspects in the body. Aquino died while being treated at the Polymedic Hospital. Policemen found the wounded holdup man dead hours later in Calamba, Laguna.
Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Hot logs seized

INFANTA, Quezon—Police and forest rangers confiscated at least 122 pieces (1,388 board feet) of illegally cut yakal, red lauan and narra in Barangay Abiawin, here on Sunday. Police said the logs were owned by a certain Peping Armaba and his partner Letty Acuña. The logs came from the Lamon Bay area facing Panukulan town, police said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Malijan, 44

CRISTINA Mendoza Malijan of Los Baños, Laguna and Tarlac died on Nov. 10 after a lingering illness. She is survived by husband Orly, children Charisse, Johanna and Patricia; mother Trinidad and sisters Enya, Cynthia, Cora and Elga. Malijan was the former executive director and later a member of the board of directors of the defunct Southern Tagalog Action for Relief and Rehabilitation, Inc. and a member of the UPLB Kappa Phi Sigma. Her remains lie at the Resurrection Chapels beside the St. Therese Church in UPLB. She will be cremated at 11 a.m. Nov. 14 at the Eternal Gardens in Biñan, Laguna after a 7:30 a.m. Mass.



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Legal team to assist OFWs

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Philippine government will send a legal panel in Kuwait to assist the three Filipinos who have been jailed in the Arab country for the alleged murder of a Canadian.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona, who is also the secretary of foreign affairs, gave this assurance to Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella, who had followed up the request of elementary school teacher Raena Tomaro, 37, for help for her husband, Teody, 39, one of the three jailed Filipinos.

Puentevella said the Vice President was particularly concerned over reports that the Philippine ambassador and his staff in Kuwait were not allowed access to the jailed Filipinos.

If it was true, it constitutes a violation of the Geneva Convention on human rights, Puentevella quoted Guingona as saying.

Ms Tomaro, a Grade 2 teacher at the Jorge L. Aranate Elementary School in Bago City, Negros Occidental, said her husband worked as a plumber at the Al-Fintas Tower in Kuwait since 1993 until his arrest in October.

She said she has had no communication with her husband since he was jailed on Oct. 27. She said he feared he might have been forced to confess to a killing that he did not commit since he had no lawyer to assist him.

The Associated Press earlier reported that Mary Jane Vintos, 26, the wife of Canadian aircraft technician Luc Ethier, 36, and five of her Filipino accomplices have confessed to killing her husband in Kuwait last month in a plot to collect his insurance money.

The Ethier couple was out for an evening stroll in Fahaheel, a shopping area south of Kuwait City, when he was killed on Oct. 10.

"My husband's need is urgent. His life is at stake . . . Only our high ranking officials can help my husband now," said Raena.

Her husband, she added, does not understand or speak the Kuwaiti language very well.

Teody, 39, and Raena have three teenage children who are studying in Negros Occidental High School. They live in Barangay Tangub in this city.

Vitos was taken to a hospital after she was injured during the shooting. In Kuwait, murder carries a maximum penalty of death by hanging, the AP report said.

Raena said her children broke down and cried when they saw the TV report on their father's involvement in the killing.

2 robbers killed in duel with cops in Kabankalan

BACOLOD CITY—Two highway robbers believed to be members of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan were killed while two police secret marshals and a truck helper were injured in a gun battle in Sitio Tapol, Barangay Salong, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental on Saturday, police said.

Police investigators yesterday identified the slain alleged RHB members as Romeo Bernades, 22, and Michael Rodrigo, 17, both of Kabankalan City.

They were killed allegedly when they tried to rob a delivery truck owned by McNeil Enterprises, which was loaded with dry goods and escorted by secret marshals.

The wounded secret marshals were PO2 Allan Reyes and PO2 Ben Bacilitasan. They are now confined at the Riverside Medical Center in Bacolod. Reyes was hit in different parts of the body while Bacilitasan had superficial wounds in the face from broken glass during the firefight.

The two policemen were assigned to escort the truck of McNeil Enterprises as it was already robbed twice in the past.

The truck was waylaid and fired upon by six men armed with an M-16 rifle, shotguns and handguns. However, the two policemen returned fire, killing two of the suspects on the spot, according to Supt. Leonardo Villanueva, Kabankalan City police chief.

Farmers ask GMA to stop imports

CAUAYAN CITY—Farmers and cooperative leaders in Isabela asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to scrap the scheme allowing rice importation by private firms so that farmers can sell their produce at higher prices.

During a consultation meeting with Isabela Rep. Faustino Dy III and National Food Authority Regional Director Jose Cordero on Friday, about 250 farmers and cooperative leaders signed a resolution calling for Ms Macapagal's intercession to save farmers from poverty.

Farmers in Isabela, considered among the country's major palay producers, said the President should put an end to rice smuggling and irregularities in rice importation like the use of recycled import permits.

They also said the NFA should increase its palay buying price to P10-P12 a kilo to absorb the high prices of farm inputs.

Dy expressed support for the farmers' concerns and said these could be used for new legislation that would address their plight.

Cordero said stopping the importation of rice by private firms would help farmers stabilize palay prices.

Aurora Mayor William Uy, also Isabela Mayors' League president, said Isabela farmers suffer from an oversupply of palay and milled rice due to importation.

"If our constituents are affected by this (rice importation), our local administration is also affected," he said.

The NFA should only import limited rice stocks for calamities to allow farmers to sell their produce at higher prices to grains traders, he said. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that 954 pieces of **Microsoft Windows 98, 2nd Edition, OEM Software** consigned to **Millennium Computer Technology Corporation** had been stolen on September 12, 2001. The incident had already been reported to the police authorities who are now investigating the matter.

The public is therefore warned to refrain from transacting with or buying from persons who may be in possession of the said stolen items. Anybody transacting, dealing or in possession of the stolen items shall be subject to criminal prosecution.

Any information leading to the recovery of the stolen items or the arrest of the person responsible for the said crime may be relayed to **Atty. Isagani C. Villanueva** at **Tel. No. 894-0146 / 894-0145** for a reward.

Stolen COA Range

Start	End	Qty
00003960046001		1
00003960046003	00003960046005	3
00003960046007	00003960046010	4
00003960046014	00003960046037	24
00003960046039		1
00003960046041	00003960046046	6
00003960046048	00003960046049	2
00003960045238	00003960045240	3
00003960045244	00003960045248	5
00003960045255		1
00003960045259	00003960045274	16
00003960874000	00003960874011	12
00003960874017	00003960874065	49
00003960874070	00003960874096	27
00003960874098	00003960874108	11
00003960874114	00003960874117	4
00003960874121	00003960874129	9
00003960874132	00003960874134	3
00003960874138		1
00003960874140	00003960874142	3
00003960874147	00003960874148	2
00003960874151	00003960874154	4
00003960874157	00003960874159	3
00003960874169	00003960874171	3
00003960874175	00003960874176	2
00003960874183	00003960874186	4
00003960874189		1
00003960874191		1
00003960874197	00003960874201	5
00003960874203	00003960874223	21
00003960874236	00003960874240	5
00003960874243	00003960874254	12
00003960874257	00003960874261	5
00003960874265		1
00003960874267	00003960874288	22
00003960874290	00003960874291	2
00003960874295	00003960874297	3
00003960874309		1
00003960874311		1
00003960874313	00003960874324	12
00003960874327	00003960874330	4
00003960874334	00003960874340	7
00003960874342	00003960874355	14
00003960874363	00003960874372	10
00003960874384	00003960874386	3
00003960874393	00003960874394	2
00003960874406	00003960874409	4
00003960874416	00003960874418	3
00003960874420		1
00003960874422	00003960874431	10
00003960874435	00003960874438	4
00003960874447		1
00003960874452		1
00003960874454		1
00003960874458		1
00003960874462		1
00003960874464	00003960874465	2
00003960874467		1
00003960874471		1
00003960874474	00003960874475	2
00003960874482	00003960874493	12
00003960874499	00003960874500	2
00003960874503	00003960874505	3
00003960874507		1
00003960874515	00003960874516	2
00003960874521	00003960874523	3
00003960874525	00003960874526	2
00003960874530	00003960874539	10
00003960874541		1
00003960874546	00003960874549	4
00003960874551		1
00003960874568	00003960874575	8
00003960874577	00003960874580	4
00003960874583	00003960874585	3
00003960874590	00003960874592	3
00003960874595	00003960874599	5
00003960874601	00003960874603	3
00003960874606	00003960874609	4
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00003960874651		1
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00003960874753	00003960874770	18
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00003960874908		1
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00003960874935	00003960874941	7
00003960874947	00003960874955	9
00003960874957	00003960874959	3
00003960874973		1
00003960874977		1
00003960875008		1
00003960875010	00003960875016	7
00003960875020	00003960875023	4
00003960875027	00003960875029	3
00003960875031	00003960875060	30
00003960875063		1
00003960875082	00003960875088	7
00003960875094		1
00003960875099		1
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00003960875379	00003960875387	9
00003960875390	00003960875391	2
00003960875395	00003960875399	5
00003960875401	00003960875413	13
00003960875417	00003960875461	45
00003960875467	00003960875480	14
00003960875483	00003960875485	3
00003960875489	00003960875499	11
Total Stolen COA		954

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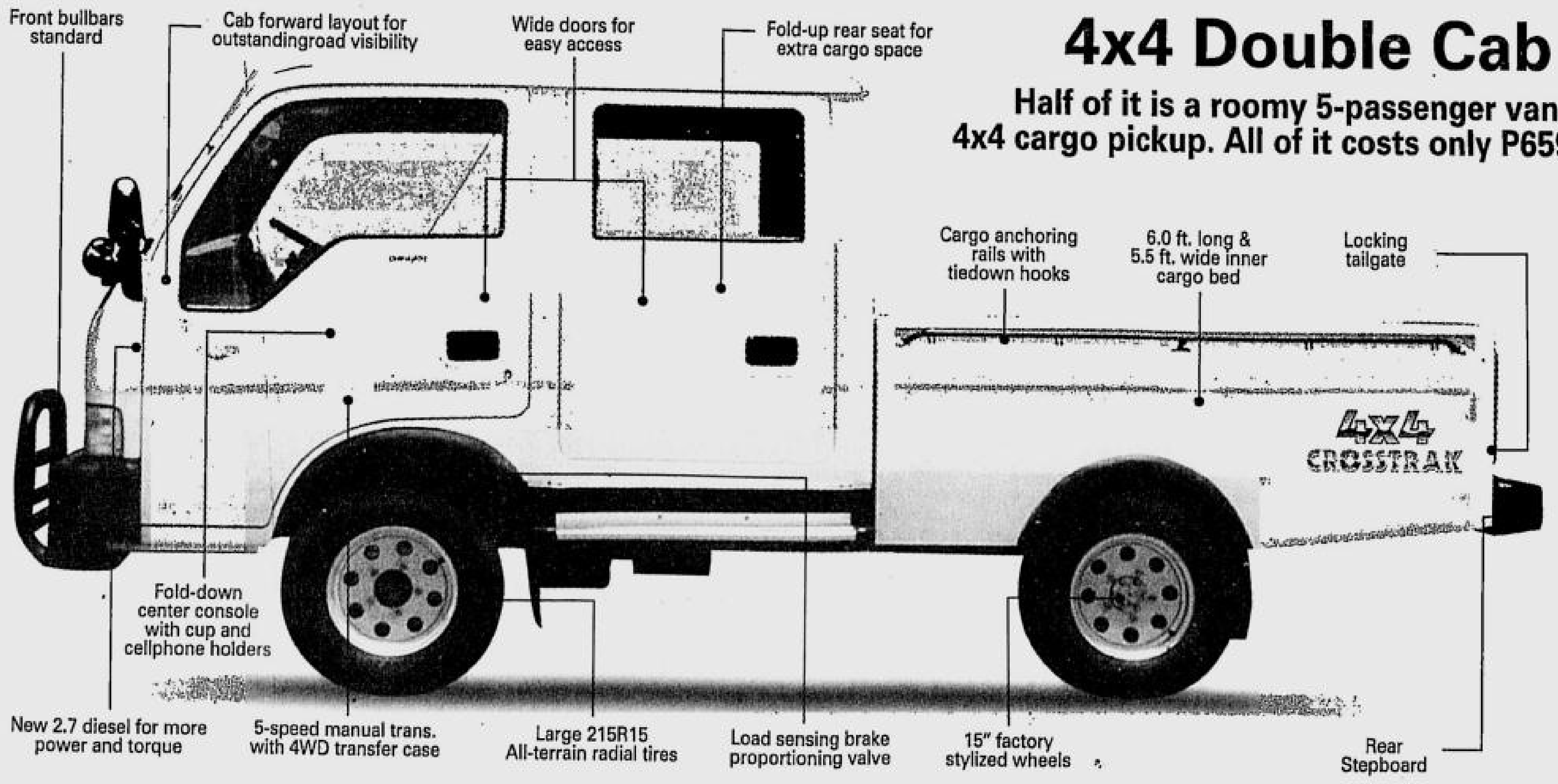
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Cab forward layout for outstandingroad visibility
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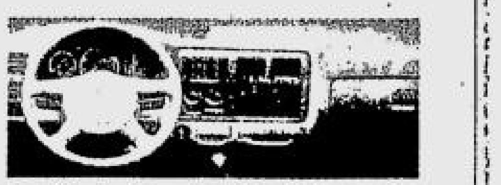
The CROSSTRAK 4x4 driver and 4 passengers reside in the roomiest, most spacious double cab! Lots of rear stretch-out legroom and front seating comfort! Rear seat also folds up for even more cargo/utility space!



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Cab width (mm)	1750	1690	1820
Cab height (mm)	2010	1640	1720
Cargo bed length (mm/ft)	1828/6.0	1400/4.6	1400/4.6
Cargo bed width (mm/ft)	1676/5.5	1500/4.9	1500/4.9
Gross Vehicle Weight (kgs)	2930	2570	2760
Engine displacement (cc)	2665	2664	3153
DRIVE TRAIN	4 x 4	4 x 2	4 x 4
STANDARD EQUIPMENT			
Aircon/Stereo	✓	✓	✓
Fold-up Rear Seat	✓	—	—
Fold-down Center Console	✓	—	—
Bullbars	✓	—	—
Side Stepboard	✓	—	✓
SRP	P 659,000	P 659,000	P 1,005,000

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Doc's daughter abducted

(From page A1)

near Shaw Boulevard.

Four gunmen with Armalites immediately alighted and forcibly took the victim. Witnesses said the gunmen reportedly poked their "long firearms" at the victim's vehicle and ordered Angela out.

A police source who asked not to be named said the kidnappers knew who their target was, noting that Angela was a biological daughter of the Pinedas while the other children were adopted.

The source added that, after taking the victim, the armed men fled in the direction of the main thoroughfare of Edsa.

PNP Deputy Director Hermogenes Ebdane, Head of the National Anti-Crime Commission Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, immediately sent a team to the crime scene to investigate.

Cotabato boy

Authorities identified the 5-year-old boy as Jimmy Yap Jr., a kindergarten student at the Pikit Central School and the son of hardware store owners. The abduction took place at about 2:30 p.m., when he was forced to board a motorcycle by the suspects.

Supt. Ruben Abapo, North Cotabato police chief, ordered a massive manhunt against the suspects who fled to the interior villages of Pikit.

Yap's kidnapping came on the heels of a police disclosure that six families in Pikit town were kidnap-for-ransom prospects.

According to Abapo, Yap was kidnapped in front of his teacher and classmates.

Another victim, Martina Martin, who was kidnapped on Nov. 4 in Libungan, Cotabato, remains in captivity. Her captors are asking P15 million for her release.

News blackout

After the abduction in Mandaluyong, police authorities appear to have imposed a news blackout.

The normally accessible head of the Eastern Police District, Chief Supt. George Alino, could not be located in his office and even refused to answer calls. The chief of the Mandaluyong City police, Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, refused to comment on the incident.

A Mandaluyong City police source admitted to the INQUIRER that Ikbala had sternly reprimanded a junior police officer who allowed himself to be interviewed by a radio station yesterday morning.

Other sources at the EPD headquarters in Pasig City told the INQUIRER that the Pineda couple had declined to cooperate with investigators. Estranged since the 1980s, the couple agreed not to talk with investigators.

Ms Pineda is a resident of one of the Valle Verde residential villages in Pasig City while Mr. Pineda resides on Amorsolo Street in Legaspi Village.

"The district director is frantically trying to convince Ms Pineda to cooperate with investigators," one EPD insider said.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. expressed regrets over the kidnapping and said he had already ordered Ikbala to form a task force that would pursue the kidnappers. Abalos said all efforts would be exerted to ensure the safety of the victim.

Political instability

In Malacañang, Tiglao admitted that kidnappings had increased lately. He attributed the rise to kidnap syndicates taking advantage of the political instability in the early months of the Macapagal administration.

But he took exception to the observation of "some opinion columnists" that the administration had failed to curb criminality, particularly kidnappings.

"I don't have the exact figures right now but admittedly there's some increase (in kidnappings)," Tiglao said at yesterday's news briefing.

"We've gone through a period of not exactly a stable political situation. There were threats to the Constitution and our police and security forces have been focused on these, which might have been interpreted by some criminal groups as an opening for them."

On May 1, pro-Estrada rallyists stormed Malacañang and tried to overthrow the Macapagal administration.

Tiglao said the police have since busted "three or four" kidnap syndicates. The last one was the "Esting kidnap gang" headed by Ramon Go whose hideout in Quezon City was raided by the police last month.

"This administration since several months ago has put the ending of these incidents as a top priority and there have been actual victories here," Tiglao added.

The President announced last month that she would re-impose the death penalty on convicted kidnappers, saying kidnap ringleaders continued to operate from jail.

Police statistics

To debunk perceptions of widespread criminality, Malacañang released yesterday Philippine National Police statistics projecting a lower crime volume this year compared with last year.

From January to September this year, a total of 57,695 crimes were recorded nationwide. The PNP projects total crime volume for the entire year to reach 76,927—which would be lower than the 80,108 recorded last year.

Tiglao also pointed out that the Pulse Asia survey from Sept. 22 to Oct. 4 showed that the President enjoyed high performance ratings in addressing the issues of peace, illegal drugs, law enforcement and widespread criminality.

He referred to the tenure of ousted President Joseph Estrada and said the number of crime cases rose from 71,575 cases during his first year in office in 1998 to more than 82,000 cases in 1999.

A popular revolt toppled Estrada in January and he has since been jailed while facing charges for massive corruption.

Based on the survey, Tiglao said Ms Macapagal's approval rating had risen to 66 percent from 38 percent in June.

The same survey showed that the President also enjoyed high performance ratings in urgent national concerns, including effective law enforcement.

"In short, Filipinos' perception of the gains of this administration in peace and order is in stark contrast to the gloom and doom of a few observers," Tiglao said.

He also criticized Chinese-Filipino civic leader Teresita Ang-See for lambasting the administration for failing to put an end to kidnappings.

Tiglao said Ang-See should instead take up her concerns before the National Anti-Crime Commission, of which she is a part, "rather than airing Cassandra-kind of statements over the media."

Asked if Malacañang would censure Ang-See, Tiglao replied, "No, we are just appealing to her to be more circumspect in her statements."

Last week, the wife of a senior French diplomat and her driver were abducted by heavily armed men in military fatigues as they headed to a Manila school to pick up her child.

They were later released unharmed, with police saying it could have been a case of mistaken identity.

Local newspapers have criticized the government for its alleged failure to smash criminal gangs and bandits behind recent kidnappings of Chinese-Filipino businessmen and foreigners.

In Mindanao, Moro bandits are separately holding two Americans, eight Filipinos and an Italian priest hostage.

Tiglao said a recent survey by Pulse Asia indicated that the public believed that the Macapagal administration was successful in curbing crime. ***With reports from Dona Pazzibugan and AFP***

'Don't use tragedy as entertainment'

(From page A1)

"These unwarranted speculations gathered from people who claim to have genuine information tend to prejudge the ongoing investigation as well as put our family at a great security risk."

Torres, 40, is the fruit of Blanca's three-year union with the late architect Ruth Torres, whom she married in 1957. Torres slipped into the country Sunday night, evading the members of the media who had staked out the Ninoy Aquino International Airport to cover her arrival.

She flew in at 10 p.m. on board a Northwest Airlines flight from Los Angeles, where she is based.

Various published reports had suggested the involvement of Blanca's longtime partner, Rod Lauren Strunk, and family friends in the killing.

Torres said that while she knew "justice will be served," it had been very difficult for her "to accept the tragic and painful death" of her mother.

"I reiterate our appeal to the media to please stick to the facts of the case and avoid using this tragic event merely as entertainment content," Torres said.

She added: "Interviews with unauthorized sources simply to add spice to the sensationalism of this case do not help the police or the family in finding the right leads. Instead, these just muddle the useful information they now have in their possession."

Before Torres read her statement, PNP Deputy Director General Thompson Lantion announced the designation of Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina as spokesperson for Task Force Marsha.

Espina said that he would conduct briefings on the case daily at 1:30 p.m., and that all questions regarding the investigation should now be made through him.

'So many versions'

Blanca's longtime assistant, Elena de la Paz, also aired a plea for the public to spare the actress' family from humiliation and hurt.

"There have been so many versions of what they said really happened," said De la Paz, who lived and worked with Blanca for 45 years. "Now they're even implicating her family and close friends to her murder. This is too much, especially for Kaye (Katherine) to handle."

De la Paz, 67, remembers Blanca as a loving, thoughtful, and God-fearing woman.

"I became a big fan during her early days at LVN Pictures," De la Paz told the INQUIRER. "I watched her movies and even tagged along with her at shootings. We became close and I became her constant companion. After a couple of years, she asked me to live with her in their house. I was very happy."

De la Paz is perhaps the only person outside Blanca's small family who truly knew the actress and who was with her in all the important moments in her life and career.

She said she knew Blanca's quirks, pet peeves, whims, favorite food, wishes—and loves.

"She was still single when we met," De la Paz recalled. "I witnessed her wedding in 1957, then the separation after three years. I was also there when she gave birth to Kaye. In some of the important events in her life, I was even more excited than she."

ELENA dela Paz: A fan who was the actress' constant companion for the past 45 years.
JOAN BONDOC

De la Paz was so devoted to her idol that she did not even give marriage a thought: "I was happy just serving Dory and being with her, so looking for a partner in life didn't become my concern."

De la Paz prepared Blanca's clothes for shooting or taping. But the actress was not a clotheshorse: "She always liked to be simple when she dressed up. She was generous but never extravagant."

De la Paz also went with her to the glitziest show biz functions.

"Sometimes, I didn't want to go with her to the show biz parties, but she would always insist," De la Paz said. "She made me feel at ease even when we were with other superstars. That's why all her friends in show biz also know me."

Wife and mother

De la Paz remembers Blanca as a loving wife to Strunk, with whom she lived for 22 years, and equally loving mother to her daughter.

"Everywhere she went, she always had something for Rod when she arrived home," De la Paz said. "Even if it was just a sandwich, she would bring it home for Rod. And she was always mindful and concerned, especially about Kaye."

At home, De la Paz said, Blanca loved tending her garden: "You could not pull her out of the garden once she started doing something there. She loved buying plants and could spend the entire morning just fixing the garden. From the time she woke up, she would work in the garden sometimes until noon.

"She also loved doing simple chores inside the house, like changing the flowers in a vase, cooking breakfast for her husband, or fixing her photo albums."

The actress also adored her cat, Ming-Ming, a native white feline that her veterinarian gave her and that she herself took to the animal clinic for vaccine shots.

Not surprisingly, the cat lover ate only vegetables, fish and other seafood, which Cedes, her cook of more than 20 years, prepared for her.

According to De la Paz, her habits were invariably simple: When she had no show biz engagements, she slept late and watched movies on her favorite cable channel, Hallmark.

Church-goer

The actress regularly worshipped at the White Plains Chapel, where her remains had lain in state since Nov. 7.

The chapel is on Nathan, the street where she lived.

"We have lived in White Plains for 30 years and she never failed to hear Mass there every Sunday," De la Paz said.

And in the four-and-a-half decades that she lived with Blanca, the actress had no known enemies, De la Paz declared.

"I was really grieved when I learned she was murdered," De la Paz said. "Why did she have to be killed that way? I did not imagine her death to be like this. It shook the entire movie industry."

Blanca had no premonition about her death, according to De la Paz.

Except for high blood pressure for which she was taking medication, the actress had no ailment.

"The only (disease) she was afraid of was cancer because a number of her friends died of it," De la Paz said. "Two weeks before she died, she called up her old friend, Lita Gutierrez, who was confined in a hospital in the United States after her (Gutierrez's) cancer recurred. She learned that Lita was undergoing chemotherapy again after 17 years of being healed."

Under wraps

Apparently at the family's request, airport authorities kept Torres' Sunday homecoming under wraps.

She was separated from the rest of the passengers and ushered through a courtesy route. Airport sources said family and friends met her at a place some distance away from the general arrival area.

Torres went straight to the chapel where her mother's body is lying in state.

The coffin was opened to allow her to view her mother's body, and resealed afterward.

That night, the chapel was closed except to Blanca's immediate family, relatives and close friends.

"We hope Ms Nida Blanca's fans and friends will understand our decision to have a little privacy in the last days of the wake," a family member, Mia San Jose, told reporters. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

Husband not suspect at this time

(From page A1)

Greenhills, San Juan, at 2 a.m. on Nov. 7 and saw her car empty.

"He said he was also looking for Blanca. He was the person who went to the Atlanta Center at 2 a.m.," Gualberto said.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, newly designated spokesperson of Task Force Marsha, said Strunk was invited for questioning "as a witness" last weekend.

Recent published reports linked Strunk to the murder, supposedly because of the actress' will.

But Espina said all these reports were "pure speculations, and we don't work on speculations." ***(See related story on this page.)***

"We are basing the investigation on solid foundation and the investigation will remain that way," he said.

Gualberto said that while Strunk was not considered a suspect at this time, he could not be cleared as yet because his statement still had to be evaluated.

"Not all persons invited are suspects, but it doesn't mean that if they are sent home they are cleared," Gualberto said.

He said investigators had suspects but were still evaluating the testimony of the 22 witnesses who had been questioned so far.

Gualberto also said the security tapes provided by the Casino Filipino had not yielded useful information because the footage was hazy, appeared to have been edited, and showed only the hands of the players and the card dealers.

"We did not see the victim in the footage," he said, adding that investigators needed to view the master copy of the tapes showing the entrance and exit of the casino.

Blanca was supposedly seen playing *pai gao* (Chinese poker) at the casino on the night of Nov. 6.

Estafa case

A complaint involving three of Blanca's friends may provide clues to investigators.

According to court records, Candelaria Ortiz Tantoco and Sylvia Ortiz Santos filed an estafa complaint two months ago against Marilyn Sese alias Anette Ryan before the Pasay City Prosecutor's office. They accused Sese of duping them into shelling out P450,000 for the processing of their applications for British visas.

The records showed that Tantoco and Santos deemed Blanca "instrumental" in the filing of the case because it was the actress who supposedly introduced them to Sese.

A source in the prosecutor's office, who asked not to be named, said Santos angrily blamed Blanca for supposedly serving as a go-between in the transaction with Sese.

Tantoco and Santos agreed last July to pay Sese P450,000 as processing fee for their British visas and those of seven other friends, according to the case information sheet.

The processing fee for each visa was supposedly worth P50,000.

But after Sese received the amount, she allegedly disappeared.

On Nov. 5, the day before Blanca went missing, Tantoco and Santos asked the Pasay court to immediately issue an arrest warrant for Sese, the court source said.

The warrant was supposedly issued two days after Blanca's body was found inside her car at the 6th-floor car park of the Atlanta Center on Annapolis Street, San Juan.

The source said investigators should look into the estafa case because it could provide leads to some of the angles they were pursuing.

Tantoco, who is said to have driven for Blanca on many occasions, had earlier been invited by police to share information that could help solve the murder.

'Information'

A man who claims to have seen what transpired between 2 and 3 a.m. of Nov. 7 is set to tell all over RMN radio, a source in the station said yesterday.

The supposed witness allegedly called RMN early on that day and said he would talk to commentator Jay Sonza today about the murder because he was being bothered by his conscience.

The source quoted the supposed witness as saying that he saw what had happened while on board his vehicle. ***With reports from Christian V. Esguerra and Luige A. del Puerto***

Davide refers Sandigan row to full court

(From page A1)

derail Estrada's trial.

Davide and a Supreme Court oversight committee will seek the wisdom of the full court during a session today in putting an end to the dispute.

The closed-door meeting between the two Sandiganbayan justices was shrouded in mystery as no one was allowed to divulge what transpired during the meeting, which ended at 4:20 p.m.

"The dialogue was held in executive session so I can't comment on it. Of the 10 who attended it, nobody is free to speculate or reveal what transpired during the meeting until the chief justice has rendered a report to the en banc," Khan said.

Cordial

Asked if the one-on-one meeting of Garchitorena and Badoy had helped resolve their differences, Khan said: "I really don't know. I was not present in the meeting. But it was cordial."

But a source said the meeting was "not cordial."

The source said Garchitorena and Badoy exchanged high-spirited arguments.

"But they did not talk at the same time. They talk one at a time," the source added.

Before the meeting started, the Supreme Court justices laid down guidelines for the meeting.

Aside from Davide, Garchitorena and Badoy, present during the meeting were the two other justices of the Sandigan third division—Ricardo Ilarde and Teresita de Castro—and Senior Associate Justice Joshue Bellosillo, chair of the high tribunal's oversight committee, and committee members Associate Justices Bernardo Pardo, Arturo Buena, Consuelo Ynarez-Santiago and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

Khan said the oversight committee facilitated the dialogue because it was in charge of the administrative and non-judicial functions of the high court.

"The oversight committee has supervisory functions," said Khan, who stressed that it could recommend sanctions or resolve conflicts involving members of the judiciary.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez had earlier asked Davide to intervene and investigate the accusations hurled by Badoy against the court's presiding justice.

Perez said Badoy's claim that Garchitorena wanted him to resign was a "very serious" matter, which should merit the attention of the chief justice and the other 14 members of the high tribunal.

Perez said that his fellow prosecutors in the trial of Estrada were shocked over the revelations of Badoy.

As head of the first division, Garchitorena handles the first perjury case against Estrada as well as the graft charges.

Badoy's division handles the more serious plunder case, illegal use of an alias and the second perjury case.

RP, Indonesia to step up naval patrols to stop arms smuggling

(From page A1)

Sayyaf bandits was a top priority of her administration.

Wirayuda said a meeting would be held in Manila between Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand on efforts to combat terrorism but gave no details.

During the Asean summit in Brunei, Ms Macapagal agreed to host counterterrorist simulation exercises involving the five Asean countries next year.

Wirayuda said officials from both governments would meet soon to delineate their sea border.

"It has been agreed that negotiating teams from both countries will immediately hold meetings to settle the borderline," he said.

Heartening results

Megawati said her talks with Ms Macapagal had yielded "many heartening results," citing cooperation in research and technology, security and the economy.

The two leaders witnessed the signing by officials of four agreements covering energy, tourism, fisheries and investment.

Indonesian Energy Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro said the two sides had agreed on four items of cooperation.

They included speeding up the development of the Asean natural gas grid, the supply of Indonesian coal from East Kalimantan and South Sumatra for power generation in the Philippines, cooperation in geothermal energy development and supplies of liquefied natural gas (LNG), including from Indonesia's Tangguh gas field in Irian Jaya.

Purnomo said Manila wanted an acceleration of the development of gas supplies from East Kalimantan. It also needed some 35 million tons of coal for power generation by 2005 and Indonesia hoped to be able to provide it.

Negotiations are going on for the annual supply of 1.3 million tons of LNG to the Philippines as the Tangguh gasfield is being developed.

Purnomo said Indonesia would be able to start deliveries by 2005.

Ms Macapagal and Megawati also witnessed the signing of at least 16 economic and trade agreements with an estimated value of $1.7 billion.

One agreement will allow the Philippines to export refractory materials as well as pharmaceutical and skin care products.

Sisters

In her talk with newsmen, Ms Macapagal said she considered Megawati a "paternal sister."

She said her late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, and Megawati's father, President Sukarno, treated each other as "brothers." They frequently exchanged visits during their administrations in the 1960s.

"Because we are brothers and sisters, let us make our people and our countries among the best economies of the 21st century," Ms Macapagal said.

Clad in orange suit, Ms Macapagal received a red-carpet welcome, including a 21-gun salute, upon her arrival at the Halim Perdakusuma Airport.

She was accompanied by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, Cabinet members, congressional leaders, and 40 private businessmen led by Jose Concepcion, vice president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

On Tuesday, Ms Macapagal will address the Asean secretariat and meet Indonesia's parliamentary leaders. She leaves for home on Tuesday afternoon. ***With a report by AFP***

Opposition captures key city; Taliban denies claim

(From page A1)

before a broad-based government can be formed to replace the Taliban.

Northern Alliance spokesperson Mohammed Abil, speaking by satellite telephone, said soldiers on the frontline in Herat reported by radio that the city had fallen.

Later, Abil reported that alliance forces captured Baghlan province and were preparing to move against the last Taliban bastion in the north—Kunduz.

Pashtuns, the same ethnic group as the Taliban, dominate Baghlan and Kunduz, while Tajiks and Uzbeks dominate the rest of northern Afghanistan.

Again, the Taliban denied that Herat and Kunduz had fallen to the Northern Alliance, Qatar's Al-Jazeera satellite channel said.

"Claims about the fall of Herat province are unfounded; the Taliban are in control there," Al-Jazeera's Kabul correspondent reported, quoting Taliban military sources.

Abil said the Northern Alliance has sent radio messages to Taliban commanders and village elders urging them to hand over Pakistani, Arab and Chechen volunteers fighting with the Islamic militia.

"We want to take these foreigners alive to show who is fighting against us," he said, stressing that the greatest resistance was coming from the foreign fighters.

Valuable prize

Herat is the most valuable prize in western Afghanistan. It also sits on the main highway that heads south to the Taliban's spiritual headquarters in the southern city of Kandahar.

With Herat in its hands, the Northern Alliance would have control over all major cities in the northern half of Afghanistan except the capitals of two northern provinces, Baghlan and Kunduz.

The Taliban's ambassador in Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, acknowledged that the Islamic militia had withdrawn from seven northern provinces.

"The Islamic army of the Taliban withdrew from these provinces in an organized way to avoid civilian casualties," he said in Pakistan's capital Islamabad.

US aircraft, including B-52 bombers, roamed the skies over Kabul on Monday and bombed Taliban positions at the frontline north of the city.

Taliban anti-aircraft guns fired sporadically, while Taliban and opposition fighters traded artillery fire that was heavier than in previous days.

Abil said that heavy fighting began Monday afternoon along the Shomali plain, 45 km north of Kabul, and that opposition troops were engaging Taliban. He claimed one line of Taliban defenses had been breached.

The sudden shift of battlefield fortunes began with the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, near the border with Uzbekistan.

It was a boost for the US-led coalition that seeks to topple the Taliban and hunt down terror suspect Osama bin Laden, the prime suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

Kabul offensive

US President George W. Bush, however, has urged the opposition not to take Kabul before a new, broad-based government could be formed, and some senior opposition figures have said they would stop short of entering the capital.

But other opposition commanders are eager to advance and regain the city that they lost to the Taliban in 1996. It was unclear whether the opposition had gained so much momentum that an assault on the capital was inevitable.

"God is great!" shouted 200 fighters of the Northern Alliance's elite Zarbati force, who loaded their weapons and headed in trucks toward the frontline.

"We will have to enter Kabul," said Shahabuddin, sitting on an armored personnel carrier in Bagram, 3 km from the front. "The Taliban will take people inside the city as hostages. It will be our job to defend the people."

In Washington, however, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Sunday acknowledged that "we don't have enough forces on the ground to stand in their way" if the Northern Alliance tried to seize Kabul.

Washington wants the opposition to hold off on assaulting Kabul to avoid a repeat of factional fighting that destroyed the capital and killed an estimated 50,000 people from 1992 to 1996, when the opposition governed.

Developments on the battlefield were so fast-moving that many of the reports could not be immediately verified.

Foreign journalists do not have access to many of the frontlines and have been speaking to opposition commanders by satellite phone.

Bush launched the military campaign against the Taliban rulers on Oct. 7 after they refused to hand over Bin Laden and members of his al-Qaida terrorist network. *Reports from AP and AFP*

Owner of telecom firm cries extortion

(From page A1)

Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI) and APC Wireless Interface Network Inc.

"They wanted the business for themselves," he said.

Asked who the parties were, Marcelo said "these are people close to the First Couple."

Marcelo did not explain how the shakedown was done. Neither did he give the amount being extorted from him.

Marcelo disclosed that he had received a call from the Senate blue ribbon committee asking him to appear before its hearing tomorrow.

The businessman said it was so short a notice that he might not have enough time to confer with his lawyer about his statement before the Senate. "I'm asking for more time to prepare," he said.

But a source close to Marcelo told the INQUIRER that the businessman had already executed a 10-page affidavit, which he will present to the committee if summoned to testify.

Asked whether Arroyo had received the bribe, Marcelo did not answer.

The Senate blue ribbon committee is investigating whether the First Gentleman received a bribe in exchange for the lifting of the President's veto of two congressional franchises. Ms Macapagal did not recall the veto and neither did Congress override it.

One franchise would have allowed PCCI to operate a clearinghouse through which telecom firms would interconnect for a fee. Another franchise would have given APC Wireless the go-signal to build a wireless telecommunication system nationwide.

Asked for comment about Marcelo's allegation, lawyer Patricia Bunye, Arroyo's spokesperson, said: "Nothing surprises us anymore."

"But this early, I would like to state that Mr. Arroyo had nothing to do with this telecommunications issue," Bunye said in a phone interview.

Not a dummy

Marcelo said he was willing "to clarify (in the committee hearing) a lot of issues and several misconceptions about this case."

One involves reports that he is a dummy of Jaime Dichaves, a close associate of deposed President Joseph Estrada. "I'm not a dummy for anyone. I own these two companies," Marcelo said.

Another involves reports on the lobby campaign to recall the President's veto.

Marcelo declined to give details of the alleged lobby campaign, saying he will do so "at the right time."

"There were a lot of personalities, who were involved," Marcelo said when pressed about those who had a hand in the events, which followed the veto of the two franchises.

"I cannot tell now."

Too late

Bunye scoffed at Marcelo's revelations, saying "he is speaking very late in the day."

"His name has been mentioned in several occasions but he did not come out. But just the same let Mr. Marcelo came out," Bunye said.

Marcelo broke his silence on the controversy a day after the INQUIRER reported that Maria Luz Nuñez, reportedly Marcelo's link to administration officials for the lobby effort, had executed a sworn statement in the United States allegedly clearing the First Gentleman.

Nuñez said she merely inquired into the status of the two franchises with Secretary Gabriel Claudio, head of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office, as a personal favor to Marcelo whom she referred to as a "close friend."

Nuñez, earlier described as "the missing link" in the alleged telecommunication franchise scam, is an executive assistant at the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Nuñez said Claudio informed her during the meeting that the President could not recall her veto.

It was through Rodrigo, an elementary and high school classmate of the President, that Nuñez was able to meet Claudio in Malacañang.

Stop probe

Bunye said Nuñez's sworn statement should be enough reason for the Senate to stop its probe of the alleged telecom franchise scam.

"Ms Nuñez had denied that there was any lobbying done in Malacañang much less a bribery," Bunye said.

Bunye said there might have been some parties who approached Marcelo and dropped the name of either Ms Macapagal or Arroyo.

"There are people who are name-droppers and they use names to take advantage of others," Bunye said.

But the source close to Marcelo said Nuñez's statement clearing Arroyo was "nothing."

"Nuñez and Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo (a former Malacañang correspondence secretary) know very little about what transpired. The final person who can tell the truth is Mr. Marcelo because he is the principal," the source said.

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara also said there was nothing in the statement of Nuñez that cleared the First Gentleman from his alleged involvement in the bribery scam.

Other witnesses

Angara said other witnesses could show proof that there was indeed an anomaly.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the blue ribbon committee, said the investigation would have to go on as scheduled tomorrow despite Nuñez's statement.

"Nobody has been dispensed with," the chair of the committee said when asked if Nuñez's statement had already cleared the First Gentleman.

Angara clarified that Nuñez only denied her involvement in the telecom franchise scam and that she had only come to know of the allegations against the First Gentleman from "text messages."

"She only denied her participation. The investigation is not complete," Angara said.

Besides, Angara pointed out, Nuñez's affidavit had not been entered as evidence in the Senate investigation.

"That's just in the newspapers. She still has to personally attest to its truth and authenticity," Angara said.

Nuñez executed her affidavit before Consul Joseph Gerard Angeles on Aug. 8 at the Philippine Consulate in New York and swore before him that the affidavit was her "voluntary act and deed."

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said "there are other witnesses, other documents to show that there really was an anomaly."

Lacson may have been referring to four other witnesses who were also reportedly summoned to the Senate investigation tomorrow.

These are Ito los Baños, reportedly a close friend of the First Gentleman; Erlinda de Leon, confidential assistant to the President; lawyer Raffy Evangelista and Nuñez's former boss, Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez.

Nuñez was tagged as the main witness in the alleged bribery scam.

But before she could be summoned to the Senate investigation, Nuñez slipped out of the country.

Rodrigo's resignation as Palace correspondence secretary put into the open the alleged bribery of Palace officials.

Rodrigo had earlier said that he heard from Nuñez that the First Gentleman had received money from Marcelo.

But in a testimony before the Senate blue ribbon committee on Oct. 11, Rodrigo cleared Arroyo.

But she identified three people, including two Malacañang officials, who allegedly received P40 million in bribes from Marcelo.

Rodrigo said De Leon, Los Baños and Antonio Gatuslao, presidential legislative liaison to the House of Representatives, reportedly took the money.

Plane crashes in NY . . .

(From page A1)

eral Aviation Administration were reviewing all recent intelligence for any signs that terrorism was involved but an hour after the crash there was no evidence pointing to an attack, said a US official speaking only on condition of anonymity.

"They are comparing information to see if it provides any insight into what transpired. At this point, there's no indication of a terrorist attack, but it certainly can't be ruled out in current environment," the official said.

Bill Schumann of the Federal Aviation Administration said there was no immediate indication of what caused the crash. He said the plane could hold up to 275 passengers, and crashed about 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the John F. Kennedy International Airport. Flight 587 was en route to the Dominican Republic.

There were no immediate reports of the number of casualties either on the ground or on the plane although four houses were reported to be on fire.

All metro area airports—including JFK La Guardia and Newark—were closed following the crash, which is in the Rockways section of Queens. All flights were diverted and Delta Air Lines spokeksperson Poeggy Estes said the airline was working to account for all its planes.

Authorities also closed all bridges and tunnels in and out of the city of New York, except to emergency vehicles.

An Agence France Presse report quoted the Pentagon as saying US fighter aircraft were conducting combat patrols over New York when the crash occurred, but there was no indication that they were involved.

"We don't have anything for you in terms of military involvement," said Air Force Major Cynthia Colin, a Pentagon spokesperson.

Mayor Rudy Giuliani rushed to the scene of the crash. He said that most of the firemen, policemen and workers who died at the World Trade Site were residents of Rockways.

One eyewitness reported debris falling from the sky, and told the Fox News Channel four homes were on fire. ABC News quoted witnesses as saying an engine fell off the plane on takeoff, affecting two areas in Queens, one of New York City's five boroughs.

Another witness told CNN he was 40 blocks away and saw "Just a lot of smoke. Tons and tons of smoke. You can see emergency vehicles heading to area. Lots of people are standing in the streets. It's very tense."

Another witness said she saw the plane pitch and then crashed into the water, skidding onto 130th to133rd Streets on Newport Avenue.

The crash came two months after the attack on the World Trade Center, which was destroyed by two Boeing 767s hijacked out of Boston's Logan Airport. One of the planes was operated by American Airlines, the other by United Airlines.

An FAA spokesperson said there was "no indication of a terrorist act," but that "all options are open at this time."

TV footage showed thick columns of black smoke rising into the sky from the crash site in the New York borough of Queens where at least four houses were on fire, according to local station WCBS.

American Airlines confirmed to CNN that the plane belonged to the airline.

In Washington, D.C., President George W. Bush met with advisers and postponed a scheduled interview with Russian and American reporters so he could monitor the investigation into the crash.

He meets Tuesday with Russian President Vladimir Putin, opening three days of talks in Washington and Texas. *INQUIRER wires with a report from Rufino Gonzales*

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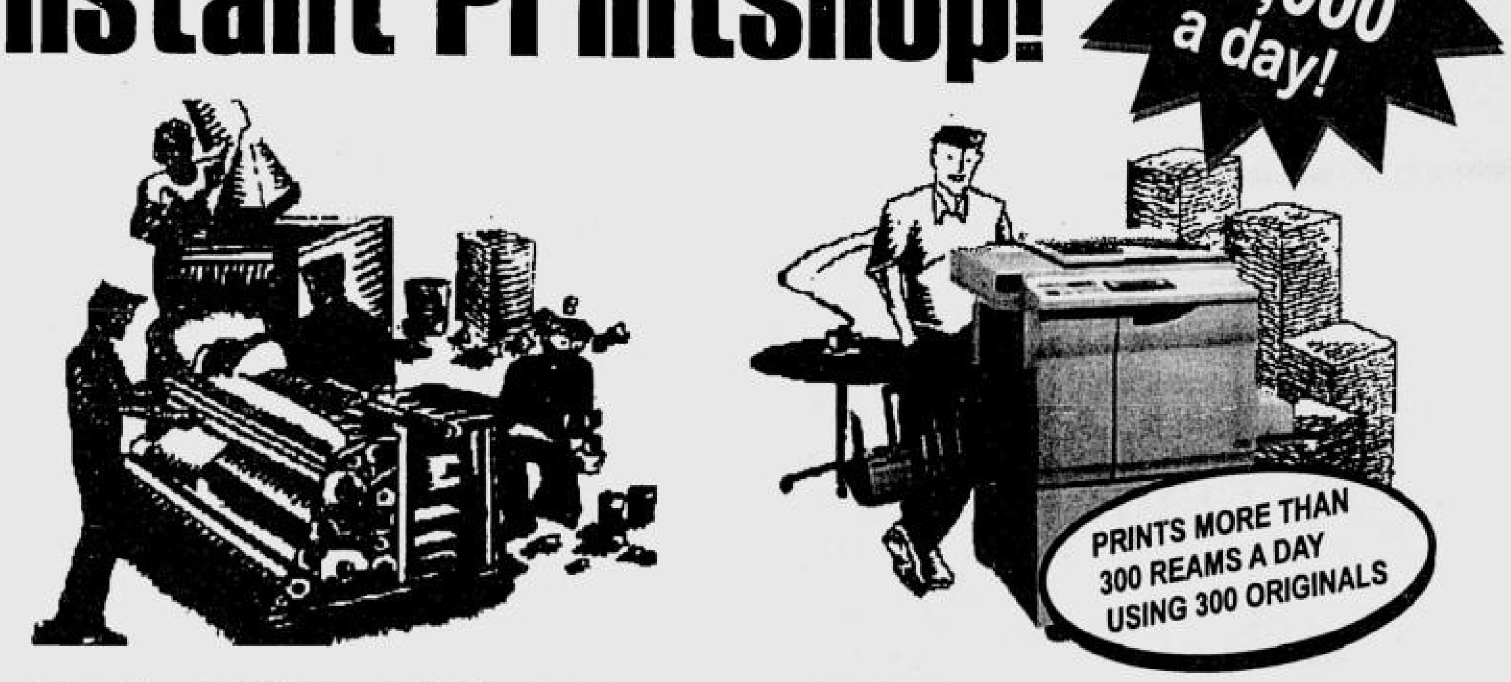
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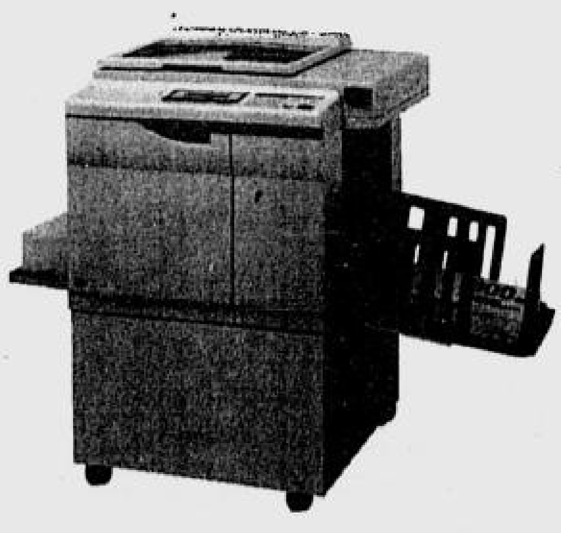

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PCA INDOOR NETFEST

Tolentino, Korean pal win

SECOND seeds Song Hyeong Keon of Korea and Pio Tolentino of the Philippines barged into the men's doubles second round via a 6-2, 6-0 win over Dennis Sta. Cruz and Sydney Mella yesterday in the P400,000 Philippine Columbian Association Open Tennis Championships at the PCA indoor court.

The victory sent Song and Tolentino, the 1994 men's singles champion, up against Rogelio Hermano and Frederick Morgan, who won by default over Roger Imara and William Sabas.

In other matches, No. 3 Jesse Lapore and Pop Sabandon defeated Gino Bautista and Dino Ferrari, 6-1, 6-1; No. 4 Rolando Ruel and Mario Sabas and Jaime Solon outplayed Christian Cuarto and Bombie Narciso, 6-2, 6-2, and No. 7 Roland Kraut and Joseph Victorino outclassed Nasty and Rodolfo Sabas, 6-0, 6-1.

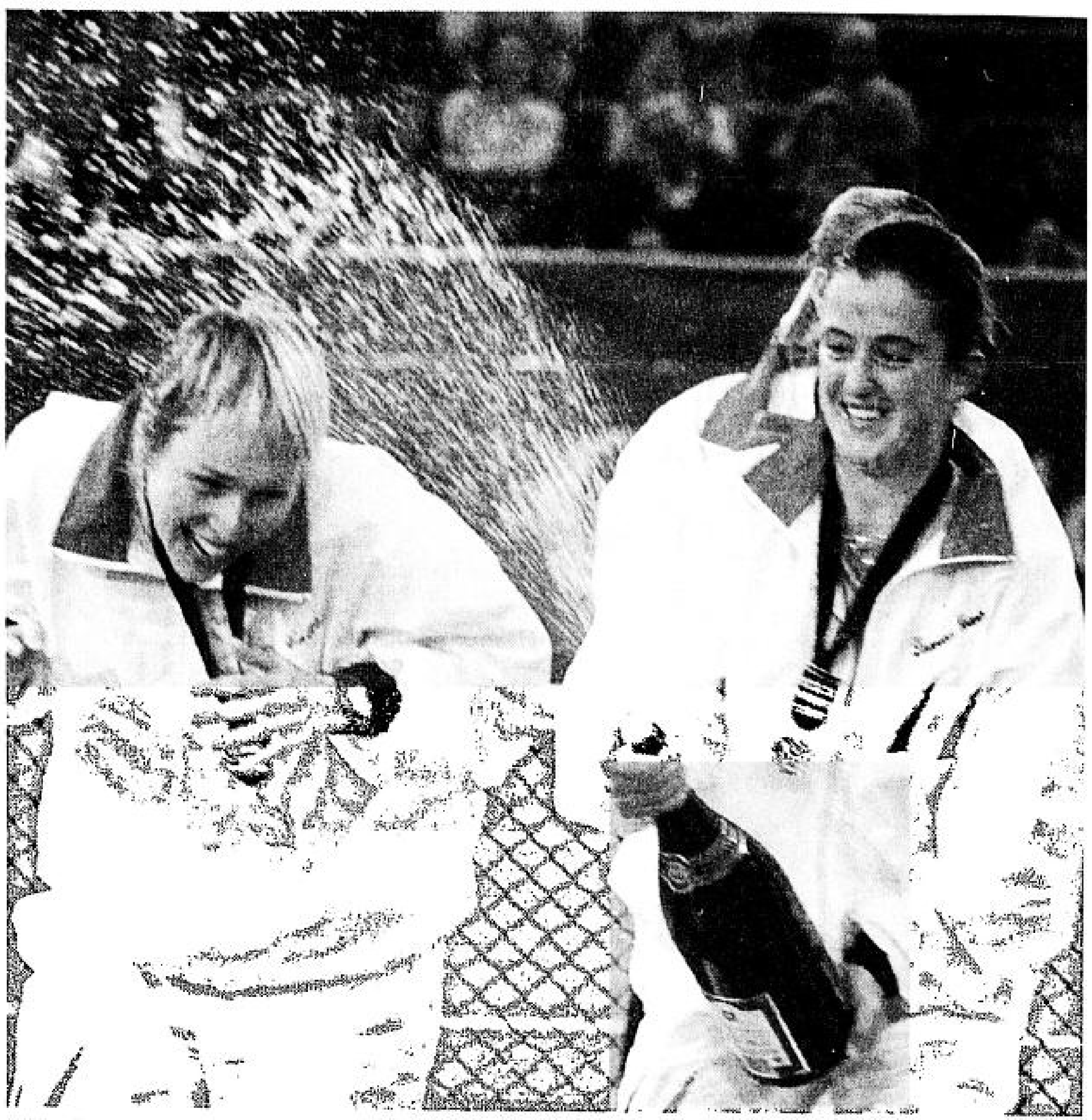
No. 9 Tonito Payumo and Virgilio Sison, No. 10 Alexander Lazaro and Michael Misa, No. 11 Adelo Abadia and Mark Grajeda and No. 12 Jayjay Stewart and Junjun Toledo also won their first-round matches in this event supported by Coca Cola, San Miguel Beer, Eastern Telecom, Stronghold Insurance, PVL Restaurant, Little Lawrence, Wilson, Unilab, Cathay Drug Company, Copacobana Hotel and official ball Dunlop.

Meanwhile, Julie Ann Cadiente downed Sommer Bisagas, 6-0, 6-4, and Alyssa Labay waylaid Josephine Nueva, 6-1, 6-1, to reach the women's singles second round.

Other winners were Petrona Bantay over Krissy Alina, 4-6, 6-0, 6-0; Anika Getubig over Liza Buenbrazo, 6-2, 7-5; Sue Donald over Divina Escala, 6-1, 6-2; Tracy Santos over Charise Godoy, 3-6, 7-5, 6-2, Shirley Valler over Stephanie Kimura, 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-4; and Kristel Samala over Marieta Errorita, 6-0, 6-1.

The men's singles third round resumes today with top seed Johnny Arcilla facing No. 14 Frederick Morgan at 1 p.m.

Song, the No. 2 seed, plays Luisito Clores, and No. 3 Adelo Abadia meets Roland Kraut at 2 p.m.



FED CUP CHAMPS

Laurence Courtois (right) sprays champagne on teammate Els Callens of Belgium after the Belgians won the Fed Cup against Russia, 2-0, in a best-of-three series in Madrid. Kim Clijsters and Justine Henin were the other members of the victorious Belgian team. Henin pulverized Nadia Petrova 6-0, 6-3 in 50 minutes. Clijsters, taking her first set in 14 minutes, dispatched Elena Dementieva 6-0, 6-4 in 49 minutes in one of the most lopsided finals in history. The Fed Cup is the equivalent of the men's Davis Cup. AP

U-Bix VIP Pro-Am on at Riviera

BRAVO

PIZARRO

ATTRACTIVE prizes are at stake when the VIP/Celebrity Pro-Am of the U-Bix Riviera National Golf Championship is held today at Riviera's Langer course in Silang, Cavite.

A star-studded cast composed of VIPs and captains of the industry will tee off shotgun style at 9:30 a.m., with some of the Top 30 pros of the country as their partners.

The cast will be led no less by U-Bix president Bert Bravo, the main man of the U-Bix Riviera Pro-Am set for Nov. 14-17, also at Riviera's Langer.

A Toyota Altis, the country's best-selling car since its launch last August, is at stake during the four-day event through Toyota Motor Philippines' Danny Isla, TMP's first vice president for marketing.

"Again, my gratitude to all the supporters of this tournament solely dedicated to our pros," said Bravo. "It is for our love of the game that we revive the Pro-Am, a revered event in Philippine golf history."

The tournament's revival will again feature the unique format of one-ball, two-some of the fabled Pro-Am, which has the backing of San Miguel Beer, Pagcor's Casino Filipino through Efraim Genuino, DHL Philippines through Rod Feliciano, Mizuno through Lovell Gopez and Herma's Group through Hermie Esguerra.

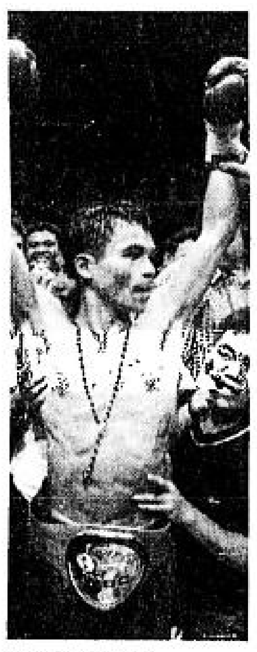
Cash prizes and gift certificates await the winners of the tournament supported by Fortune Tobacco, Mayor Joey Marquez of Parañaque City, Roche Int'l, Foremost, Cinnabon Rolls, Vic Sotto's Travel Bug, Solahart, Caffe Appassionato, Citgo, Pivo Praha beer, Citra Tollways, Golden Grove Estates, Bravo Golf, Cena Restaurant and Bel-Air Bakery on N. Garcia Street in Makati City.

"We are all set," said Comm. Danny Pizarro, Riviera's president who is chairman of the U-Bix Pro-Am organizing committee. "The tournament has attracted an overflow cast, which is another proof that the magic of the Pro-Am will live on forever."

Among the stars in the cast are Tony Lascuna, Cassius Casas, Robert Pactolerin, Rey Pagunsan and former jungolf champion Gerard Cantada, who will be having his second stint as a pro after finishing strong in the last Philippine Open at Wack Wack.

Tibayan ace

REY Tibayan, a visting physician from Diamond Bar, California, scored a hole-in-one recently at the 207-yard par 3, 13th of Capitol Hills. It was the 59-year-old's first ace. He was in the company of fellow physician Antonio Tiosejo, Serafin Daof and Col. Abe Villanueva.



PACQUIAO

Pacquiao rematch a no-no

AMERICAN lawyer Sydney Hall who works closely with big-time boxing promoter Murad Muhammad said yesterday "there won't be a rematch" between IBF super bantamweight champion Manny Pacquiao and WBO champion Agapito Sanchez, who brawled to a draw in six bloody rounds Sunday adding, "Sanchez isn't worth it. Manny has better fish to fry."

American trainer Freddie Roach shared the opinion of Hall even as he blasted Sanchez whom he accused of "deliberately fouling Manny over and over." Roach said that while it is true referee Marty Denkin penalized Sanchez twice, "he hit Manny low 20 more times that went unpunished."

An angry Roach who steered Pacquiao to a sensational sixth round KO over South African champion Lelohonolo Ledwaba last June 24 in Las Vegas branded Sanchez as "a disgrace to boxing who should have his license taken away."

Murad Muhammad who arranged the title fight against Ledwaba and also promoted the Sanchez unification battle said he was "very proud" of Pacquiao and the 22-year-old Filipino "has nothing to be ashamed of. Manny is a bigger star now because of the bad

Cuello, Zarate off to Japan Cup

THE PHILIPPINE duo of Rodrigo Cuello and Danny Zarate left Sunday for Japan to join 22 other teams in challenging the title-retention bid of the US pair of Tiger Woods and David Duval in the World Cup of Golf starting Thursday.

Cuello and Zarate were flown on business class by Philippine Airlines. They were picked up at the airport by organizers and brought to their official hotel in Shizuoka by car.

The RP duo joins a star-studded cast of 24 teams, 18 of them seeded outright to the tournament proper.

Six pairs are qualifiers from the Davidoff Nations Cup in the $3 million event set to be played at the Taiheyo Club's Gotemba course.

Retief Goosen, who has just taken over the title as Europe's No. 1 player, will represent South Africa with Ernie Els. Vijay Singh will play for Fiji and Sergio Garcia for Spain.

"We're the longshots so for us there's nothing to lose and everything to gain," said Zarate. "While making it this far is already quite a feat, we hope to prove our worth."

Zarate and Cuello have prepared intensely the past three weeks and will try to extend their luck that started in Malaysia where they took the fourth of the six slots disputed.

Enriquez LGBA leader

THE SPECTACULAR cockfight showdown of Luzon breeders continues at 6 tonight via the second "LGBA 6-Stag Derby" at the Mandaluyong Coliseum. More than 50 fights are scheduled.

Rizal's Biboy Enriquez currently leads the LGBA Gamecock Breeder of the Year race with 7.5 points, trailed by Batangas bets engineer Jun Sevilla (JRS Spectrum) and LGBA president Boy Diaz and Butch Littaua (Purple Haze), who have six points each.

Peping Cojuangco of Tarlac (CAT Stinger), Sandy Javier and B. Diaz of Batangas (Royal Maverick Purple Haze I) and Rep. Lawrence Wacnang of Rizal (Crowsland) of Rizal have 4.5 points each.

"With two more derbies remaining, it's still anybody's race for the LGBA Gamecock Breeders of the Year plum," LGBA president Boy Diaz explained.

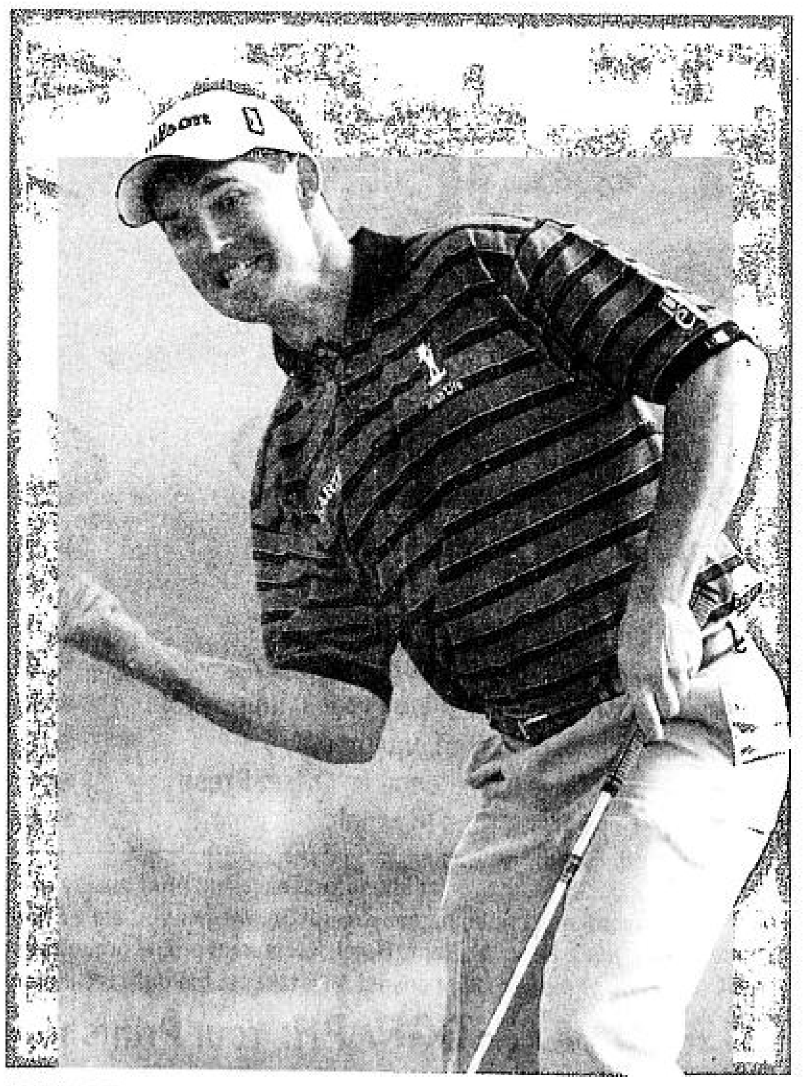
The third and final LGBA 6-Stag Derby is slated on Nov. 20 and 22.

This prestigious event is sponsored by Washout Natural Insecticidal Shampoo, Wormal, Enertone (ready mix maintenance feeds) and the dynamic trio of Promotor '43, Respigen 15 and Voltplex.

For inquiries, call 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 534-4110.

RP tankers beat rivals

THE PHILIPPINE Team A beat Hong Kong Team B, 12-9, in the final of the 4th International Friendly Matches at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex swimming pool in Manila recently. Rookie Sherwin dela Paz scored in the first quarter but was quickly equaled by Hong Kong's Howie Wong. Roy Cañete, Michael Jorolan and Dale Evangelista followed suit for the Filipinos before Hong Kong's Doug Woodring managed to throw a low corner shot ending the first quarter, 5-3.



VOLVO MASTERS KING

Ireland's Padraig Harrington jubilates after sinking a 7.5-meter (25-foot) birdie putt at the last hole to capture by one stroke the $2.9-million Volvo Masters title at Montecastillo on Sunday. Not usually demonstrative, Harrington unleashed three celebratory punches. "When that putt went in, I was at the boiling-point. To hole at the last to win is every kid's dream," he said. He pocketed $487,000. AP

Defensor new chess president

A DIVERSE group of 15 chess loving individuals led by lawyers Matias V. Defensor and Sammy Estimo were elected to the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) board of directors at the Capitol Hills on Saturday.

Executive Director and Corporate Counsel Sammy Estimo garnered the most votes with a tally of 58 while Defensor, who helped bankroll almost all major projects of the NCFP this year, received 57 votes out of a possible 62.

Completing the roster of new board members is incumbent FIDE Delegate Casto Abundo, lawyer Andres Gatmaitan, banker Jose Lustre, Manila Sports Council head Ali Atienza, International Arbiter Gene Poliarco, Uniliver vice-president Glenn Bordonada, Delta Motors president Narcing de la Merced, Noel Albano from the Office of the House Speaker, Cebu City's chess godfather Benjamin "Boogie" Lim, Juanito Calditaran of Belgosa Media Systems, Butch Llamas of the Philippine Chess Society, Presidential Adviser on Military Affairs Arturo Carrillo and PAF Col. Jaime M. Viernes.

Meanwhile, members of the said board will elect the new set of officers at the same venue on Nov. 16 at 6 p.m.

Outgoing NCFP president Eugene Torre expressed his optimism on the outcome of the general assembly.

"I am very happy with our new officials," said Torre. "I believe that they will really support chess in the country."

Barretto to compete in Macau

MULTI-TITLED car racer Angelo Barretto, the 2000 PSA Driver of the Year, will be pitting talents against the world's best car racers in the 2001 Guia race of the Macau Grand Prix on Nov. 18.

The lone Filipino competitor in the field carrying the country's colors on all AAI-Castrol Toyota Altezza, Barreto is being backed up by Castrol GTX Magnatec, Toyota Manila Bay, EBC Brakes, Casio G-Shock and No Fear.

The Guia Race of Macau Grand Prix is the premiere touring car event in the Asia-Pacific region and is part of the Asian Touring Car Challenge (ATCC) of the Asian Festival of Speed. The event has always been a showcase for future world champions in motor sports—among them Ayrton Senna, Michael Schumacher, Mika Hakkinen, Jacques Villavueve, Juan Pablo Montoya and Jarno Trulli.

Masbate booters enter Luzon finals

MASBATE CITY—Masbate National Comprehensive High School blanked Cataingan National High, 3-0, Sunday to rule the local Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football eliminations and earn a slot in the Luzon finals.

Severino Floresta, who was eventually player, knocked in one of the champs' goals in the 39th minute.

The other MNCHS markers came from Sorito Judal (24th minute) and Homber Mijares (56th).

Earlier, Masbate National Comprehensive High B whipped Dimasalang

In a related development, St. Paul's School of Barotac Nuevo and Barotac Nuevo National Comprehensive High boys shut out Janiuay National Comprehensive High, 4-0.

The Iloilo champion will automatically clinch a seat in the national finals set in

Resurrection; paging Meralco's Elpi

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WHEN the first tee shot of the U-Bix Riviera Pro-Am is hit today at Riviera's Langer in Silang, Cavite, the sound it will create will echo all over the archipelago. The shot will re-enact the one hit in 1958, when the first Pro-Am at Fort Bonifacio was launched. The inaugural winners were Pastor Domingo (pro) and Dr. Roberto Laperal.

Such is the cache of history stored in the vaults of what was then called the Boni Pro-Am.

The only one of its kind in the world for so many years, the Pro-Am's uniqueness is the envy of golf organizers around the world. When it folded up in 1995 after the Ft. Bonifacio course was torn down to give way to The Fort that is now a symbol of Makati's expansion in the new millennium, not a few shed tears of sadness.

"My heart bled a little then," said Taby Tabaniag, who was part of the Boni Pro-Am Golf Council since its birth in 1958. "With its revival, my joy is restored unequivocally."

Sportsman Bert Bravo of U-Bix Corporation, the tournament's new godfather, said: "Our love for the game pushed us to resurrect the tournament. The event, needless to say, is for our pros who seem to toil without end in pursuit of their dream to make it big one day."

The one-ball, two-some format allows a tandem to hit the ball alternately after each tee shot. The tournament is thrill-filled while it poses a challenge to the true character of each of the partners. A partner cannot afford to lose focus as one mistake can ruin the team's performance. It can be fatal. Indeed, this is a tournament that demands ultimate concentration from the duo; unity of purpose is the one premium that should weld a partnership to an unbreakable, unshakeable bond.

The winners of the tournament's last staging in 1995—Rodrigo Cuello (pro) and Rey Pagunsan—are still around. But Cuello is out this time as he is playing this week in the World Cup in Japan. Pagunsan is around—and he is now a pro himself.

The winners by Saturday afternoon—the event's 38th pair—will not only take home a bonanza of prizes. More important, they shall have scored one victory worth recording in golf's history books.

■

I'm calling on Elpi Cuna, that super-friendly guy from Meralco, to speed up the Meralco connection of the Cantada Sports Complex in Bicutan. Boy Cantada, who built the state-of-the-art edifice in response to the mood of the sporting times, said he could not fully operate his babe because of the absence of Meralco electricity. The application for connection has been at Meralco for months now.

C'mon, Elpi. Let's do it, please?

SPORTS

Al S. Mendoza, Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**, Assistant Editor

McGwire: I'm worn out

ST. LOUIS — Mark McGwire, the former single-season home run king, will retire from baseball after telling US sports network ESPN he is worn out. McGwire strongly hinted at a possible retirement several times this year, when he batted just .187 with 29 home runs as he was slowed by an injured right knee. McGwire had agreed to a $ 30 million, two-year contract extension in spring training but never signed the deal. *AP*

Qatari is strongest man

ANTALYA, Turkey — Saeed Salem Jaber of Qatar hoisted 460 kilograms (1,012 pounds) to win three golds at the world weightlifting championships on Sunday and become the strongest man in the world - at least for now. Jaber, who competed in the over-105 kilogram weight category, pumped 210 kilograms (462 pounds) in the snatch and lifted 250 kilograms (550 pounds) in the clean-and-jerk for first place overall. *AP*

THURSDAY MEETING

GMA orders Tuason-Acap dialogue

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason to meet with the officials of the Athletes and Coaches Alliance of the Philippines on Thursday and urged him to raise their salaries and improve food catering services.

This was confirmed by Tuason himself who personally notified Acap president Jaime Sebastian of the meeting during their chance meeting in Tubod, Lanao del Norte on Sunday to open the First Mindanao Friendship Games.

Although the President gave two marching orders to Tuason, the PSC chief said Ms Arroyo won't be present in the meeting which will be held at 10 a.m. at the PSC building.

Tuason said Sebastian agreed on the date, while denying reports that he engaged the former weightlifting hero in a shouting match in front of President Arroyo while in Tubod.

"We even shook hands and we were very civil with each other," said Tuason. "People who are trying to muddle the issue are making up stories."

He vehemently denied raising his voice on the Acap president who reportedly shouted back at him within hearing distance from Ms Arroyo during the Games' opening rites.

Sebastian is still in Tubod as of presstime and can't be reached for comment.

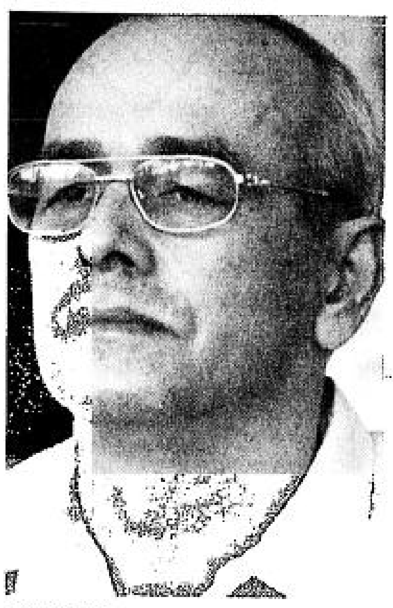
The President told Tuason to raise the national athletes' salaries to the 1998 level, which is P8,000 for Class A, P6,000 for Class B and P4,000 for Class C athletes. The 1998 rates were cut by P500 just before Tuason took over as chair.

She also asked Tuason to improve the services of the food caterers inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Though the PSC chair said he will not terminate the contract of the catering service, Tuason said he will tell them to "shape up or ship out" and raise the quality of food service for more than 300 athletes living in RMSC.

However, Tuason said President Arroyo didn't have any instructions about the athletes' quarters, which is one of the demands of the Acap members, who have stopped their protest rally upon the request of the President.

PRES. ARROYO


TUASON

Gloria lauds Lanao Games organizers

TUBOD, Lanao Del Norte—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo praised the organizers of the First Mindanao Friendship Games and urged other local government units to emulate Lanao del Norte for staging the event.

Ms. Arroyo said the ongoing games should serve as an example for local governments in the other four regional clusters—Northern Luzon, National Capital Region, Southern Luzon, and Visayas—in staging the same sports meet.

"We laud the organizers of the games for staging this event despite budgetary constraints," said Arroyo in her first appearance as chief executive in a major sportsfest.

"The Mindanao Friendship Games cost P8 million-P5 million from host Lanao del Norte and P3 million from the Philippine Sports Commission. Holding the meet in the other four regional clusters will cost about P40 million, less than the P120 million budget being spent for the Palarong Pambansa," she added.

President Arroyo, however, did not say if the Palarong Pambansa would be scrapped despite implying that the government is inclined to save funds amid the economic crisis besetting the country.

PSC Chair Carlos D. Tuason said that it would be very untimely to scrap the Palarong Pambansa since the PSC and the House of Representatives, through former PSC commissioner and now Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, chairman of the House committee on youth and sports, have started laying down the groundwork in reviving the annual event.

"The PSC wants the Palarong Pambansa to stay because we believe it is an essential part of our grassroots development program. But it is still the President who has the final say on this," added Tuason, who was accompanied here by PSC commissioners Cynthia Carrion and Ricardo Garcia.

Commissioner William Ramirez, the meet's overall project director, said the PSC has already started moves on staging an event similar to the Mindanao Friendship Games—the biggest to be held in the region since the Mindanao Meet in the '60s—in Northern Luzon, possibly the Cordillera region.

BAP bats for Zamar as ass't coach

By June Navarro

SHOULD the PBA sign the memorandum of agreement drafted by the Basketball Association of the Philippines, the coaching staff of the RP squad to next year's Asian Games won't be an all-PBA team.

BAP secretary general Graham Lim yesterday said they would include a provision in the MOA that would allow the BAP to appoint an assistant to the head coach named by the PBA.

Although it directly goes against the PBA's interest of having a blanket authority on the formation of the team including its coaching staff, Lim said the practice dates back during the 1998 Bangkok Asian Games.

He said men's national team head coach Boysie Zamar would fit the bill, noting that Zamar had steered the MBA-backed national team in winning the Southeast Asian Games gold medal in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Zamar played for the University of the East Warriors and had a brief stint in the PBL before taking up the coaching chores for the national team.

"With his (Zamar) experience in coaching the national team employing amateur rules, he could be a big help for the RP Asian Games basketball team," Lim told the INQUIRER.

Dong Vergeire, who was appointed by the BAP, was supposed to be included in the coaching staff during the 1998 Asiad but changes were made at the last minute.

Vergeire, now head coach of the College of St. Benilde, was then replaced by UST mentor Aric Del Rosario, who acted as assistant coach to Alaska coach Tim Cone in steering the Centennial Team to a bronze-medal finish.

The PBA is expected to name its head coach for the Pusan, South Korea Asian Games within the week while the MOA, Lim said, would be signed not later than next week.

PBA officials declined to bare the possible names who will lead the PBA-spiked national team but sources said the list is short, pruning it down only to Filipino coaches.

Welcoat eyes 3rd consecutive win

STANDINGS	W	L
Welcoat	2	0
Blu	2	1
Kutitap	2	1
Ana Freezer	1	1
Shark	1	2
Montaña	0	3
Ateneo-Pioneer	0	0
ICTSI Archers	0	0

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Ana Freezers vs Blu Detergent
5:30 p.m.—Kutitap Toothpaste vs Welcoat

DOMINANT Welcoat guns for its third straight win against Kutitap Toothpaste, while Blu Detergent battles unpredictable Ana Freezers today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Hardly tested in their last two outings, the Paintmasters are favored to prevail over the Sparklers, who is riding high on a two-game winning streak.

The Kutitap-Welcoat match is set at 5:30 p.m. Ana Freezers and Blu Detergent tangle in the curtain-raiser at 3:30 p.m.

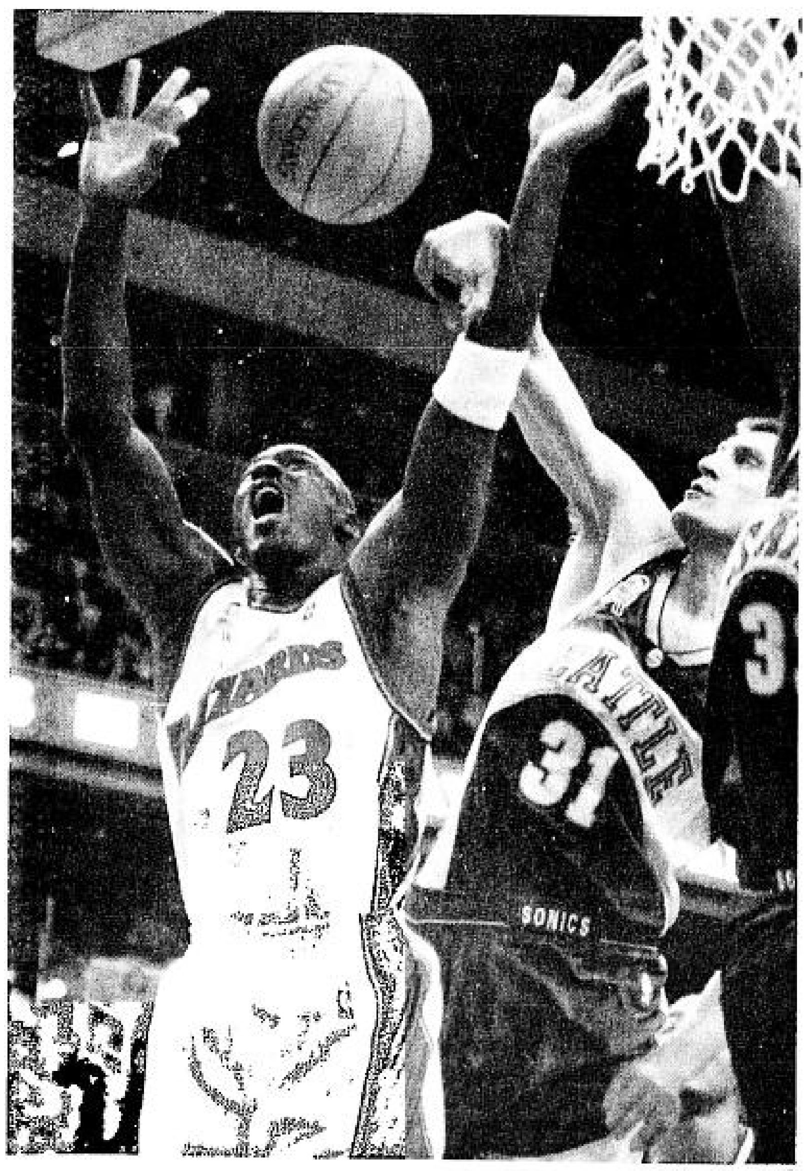
Coach Rudy Mendoza's Freezer Kings will aim for a successful follow-up of their 72-67 conquest of defending champion Shark Energy Drink last Friday. Ana upended Shark despite the absence of Pangasinense forward Dondon Mendoza (no relation to Rudy), whose repeated absences in practice and hard-headed ways have prevented his rise.

Under Mendoza, Ana has blossomed into a team with unorthodox styles of play. The Freezer Kings can easily shift from a run and gun to a slow-break, halfcourt offensive team. While emphasizing defense, Mendoza has also given his charges the leeway to shoot.

Blu is going to be a tough customer, though. Still looking for their first title after three years, the Detergent Kings possess the toughness to prevail in tight situations as they've shown in beating Montaña, 69-67, last Saturday.

With Yancy de Ocampo attracting the double team, Welcoat punishes its foes with their outside shooting. Ren Ren Ritualo and Jojo Manalo have been scoring in double figures.

Kutitap however, isn't going to surrender without a fight. "We have the desire to win," said Kutitap mentor Koy Banal. He will rely on Wesley Gonzales, Francis Mercado, Cyrus Baguio, Nino Gelig and Mark Saquilayan.


AP

BRENT Barry (right) of Seattle swats the ball away from Jordan.

Sonics tame Wizards as Jordan hits only 16

WASHINGTON —Michael Jordan missed his first 14 shots Sunday and has a four-game losing streak for the first time in 11 1/2 years after the Washington Wizards fell to the Seattle SuperSonics 99-84.

Jordan finished with a season-low 16 points. His NBA-record streak of games with at least 10 points - now at 847 games - was in jeopardy until he hit a couple of jump shots to start the fourth quarter.

He missed 21 of 26 shots, including an easy alley-oop which he decided not to dunk, two reverse layups and an open jumper that Brent Barry practically dared him to shoot.

Gary Payton scored 12 of his 32 points in the fourth as the Sonics broke a three-game losing streak.

Trail Blazers 100, Pistons 98

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Bonzi Wells scored 10 of his game-high 30 points in the final 3:24 to help Portland snap Detroit's four-game winning streak.

Rasheed Wallace added 27 for Portland. Dale Davis had nine points and 15 rebounds.

Lakers 108, Magic 95

In Los Angeles, Shaquille O'Neal grabbed 38 points and 18 rebounds as Los Angeles kept their perfect start to the season intact by defeating Orlando for their sixth consecutive victory.

The Magic, the NBA's highest-scoring team, briefly challenged in the first half, but like the Lakers' first five opponents, they offered little resistance against O'Neal. He dominated any defender who came into the paint, including former Lakers teammate Horace Grant.

O'Neal's points were a season high.

Orlando's Tracy McGrady scored 22 points and Grant Hill added 21 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists.

Despite a bloody nose and fouling out with 24 seconds remaining, Los Angeles' Kobe Bryant scored 28 points.

Complete results:

Seattle 99, Washington 84; Portland 100, Detroit 98; Denver 96, Toronto 85; L.A. Lakers 108, Orlando 95. *AP*

HARDCOURT HERO

Chris Clay keeps Laguna 5 going

AS long as Chris Clay keeps on scoring, FedEx Laguna keeps on winning.

The high-flying Fil-Am, the MBA scoring king, averaged 35 points in the Lakers' last three wins that extended their streak to seven in the elimination round of the Second Phase.

Clay, who also owns the season-high of 51 points, knocked in 39 points when the Lakers routed the defending Southern Conference champion Negros Slashers on Nov. 7.

The 6-foot-3 Clay then poured in 25 points to lead the Lakers past national champion and First Phase titlist Andok's San Juan, 95-85, on Friday before culminating his splendid showing with a 40-point output against the TPG Davao Eagles, 130-114, last Sunday.

That his torrid scoring was done against the league's best defenders and double teams at times, was enough for the MBA Press Corps to name Clay as its Hardcourt Hero from Nov. 7-11.

This will be the second time for Clay to earn the weekly citation, joining LBC Batangas' Alex Compton as the only two-time winner thus far.

Clay edged teammates Jerome Barbosa and Mike Manigo, Negros' John Ferriols and Jomar Tierra, LBC Batangas' Peter Martin and Nueva Ecija's Paolo Malonzo for the award.

If Clay can sustain his pace, expect the Lakers to continue rising in the Second Phase.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: Senior PGA - Our Lucaya Senior Slam, First Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

LPGA Cisco World Ladies Match Play Championship, Third Round at 4 p.m. on ESPN

BASKETBALL: Coaches vs Cancer Ikon Classic, Championship at 2 p.m. (r) on ESPN

TENNIS: Masters Cup Sydney 2001, Early Round Coverage Day #1 at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. (r), Day #2 at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Star Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Yearbook 2000 - Baltimore Ravens at 9:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN

NFL - Baltimore Ravens vs Tennessee Titans at 10 a.m. (r – 8:30 p.m.) on ESPN

NFL's Greatest Moments Hall of Fame Profiles at 1:30 p.m. on ESPN

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1996, Efren "Bata" Reyes beat Rodolfo "Boy" Luat, 11-9, to lead an all-Filipino 1-2-3 finish at the Denver Dustoff 9-ball championship in Colorado. Also today in 1989, Jojo Cayson knocked out Indonesian Nocce Lukman in the 10th of the 12-round bout to become the new Oriental-Pacific Boxing Federation 126-pound champion at the Cebu Coliseum.

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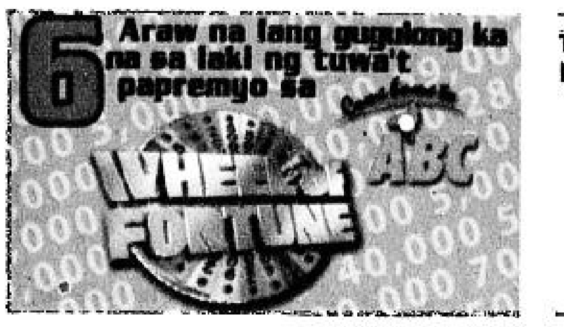
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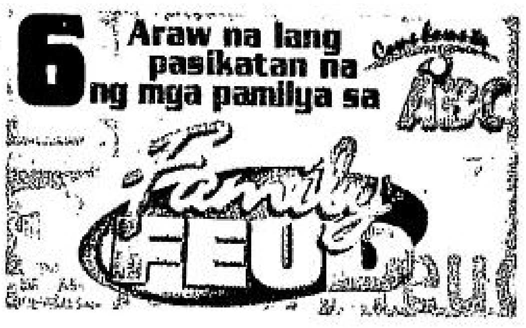
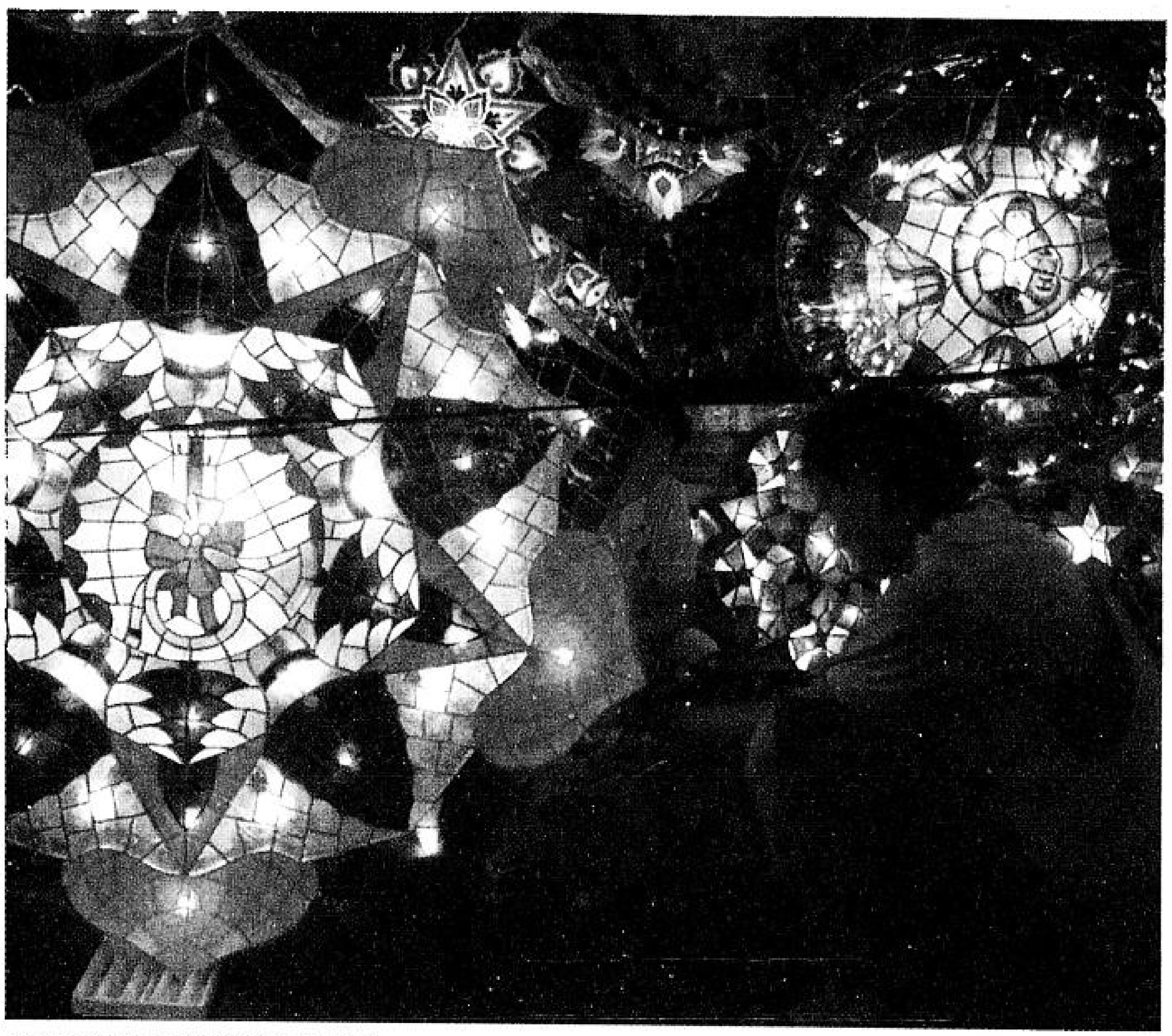
Wheel of Fortune


6 Araw na lang pasikatan na ng mga pamilya sa ABC
Family Feud

Docs protest PGH rate increase



STARS OF SAN FERNANDO
The famous Christmas lanterns of Pampanga light up many shops along the road in Barangay Dolores, San Fernando. Residents start working early in the year to create the long-lasting lanterns whose prices range from hundreds to thousands of pesos.
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

By Jerome Aning

"MEDICINES not bombs, life not death."

About 250 doctors, other medical workers and medical students chanted this yesterday as they held a two-hour picket and noise barrage at the Philippine General Hospital in Ermita, Manila to protest the increase in fees in the government-run facility.

The protesters are members of the Coalition of Concerned Health Workers, Employees and Students of UP-Manila-PGH. They were opposing PGH Memorandum No. 01-13, which revises and increases the fees for more than 40 hospital laboratory procedures and supplies.

They also burned a symbolic money sack that contained bombs, symbolizing the controversial provisions of the memo that they said was anti-poor.

Dr. Victor Federico Acepcion, president of the PGH Physicians' Association and a member of the coalition, said the fee increases "would worsen the already dismal health situation of our patients."

"Our patients are already suffering from poverty," Acepcion said. "Some hospital staff even shell out money for poor patients' food and transportation."

He added that very often, the resident physicians "act as social workers trying to find scarce funds for patients' care."

Ely Estropigan, president of Umagap-PGH or the Unyon ng Manggagawang Pangkalusugan sa PGH, said the hospital might be suffering from a fund shortage. But he said the hospital administration erred in passing the burden to the people "by collecting from them fees they cannot afford."

"The government treats health care as a burden instead of prioritizing it for the welfare of our nation," Estropigan said, recalling that in the latest Congress hearing for the 2002 budget, most of the budget allocations went to debt servicing and military spending.

"Health spending only ranks 11th and, as with education, the slight nominal increase is insufficient to make up for inflation and population growth," he explained. "Health spending is only four percent of the total debt service and only 1.8 percent of the total proposed budget."

Aside from the association of doctors and the Umagap-PGH, the protest also included delegations from the Anakbayan-UP Manila, the University Student Council, the Medicine Student Council of the UP College of Medicine and the PGH Utility Workers Association. The protest lasted from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The coalition leaders said they were hoping the PGH administration would listen to them.

Different organizations have joined the movement, including the Network Opposed to Privatization, the Alliance of Health Workers, Gabriela, the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap and the Kilusang Mayo Uno.

Daylight saving time proposed

A MANILA councilor has suggested that the city adopt a daylight saving time (DST) scheme during summer to save energy and reduce the occurrence of power failures.

In a proposed resolution, Councilor Jhosep Lopez of the third district said DST should be implemented from May to June, with the standard time being advanced one to two hours.

Citing the opinion of conservationists, Lopez said DST is a practical program being implemented even in the United States and several European countries.

With the clocks advanced, the days would be longer. Business firms and households could conserve electricity and power-producing plants would be able to rest since "night-time" would officially come even when the sun has not yet set.

The Aquino administration implemented DST in the entire country, which was then experiencing a power crisis. But the clocks, unlike in Lopez's proposal, was turned back by an hour.

Jerome Aning

Councilor Nat Santiago charged with contempt over demolition

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

SANTIAGO

TRUE to form, Caloocan Councilor and activist Nathanael Santiago took up the cudgels for squatters whose houses were demolished, and he was slapped with a contempt suit—his first in office—for his effort.

The charge came after the owner of the property, Ma. Leonor Reyes-Gramzen, accused Santiago of inciting squatter residents to resist a court order to demolish the houses of at least 14 families.

But Santiago remained unfazed and described the charge as "harassment, unjust and baseless."

He said the contempt charge was apparently meant to intimidate him and the hundreds of families whose houses were threatened with demolition.

"Rather than intimidate me, this charge enrages and emboldens me to stand squarely and firmly to assist the hundreds of families who are now being displaced by sheer greed and indifference of their landlord," Santiago said.

"Ms Reyes-Gramzen seems to have forgotten the legacy left by the venerable Justice JBL Reyes, a staunch advocate of human rights," he added.

The contested lot is over a hectare in size and practically covers all of Barangay 39 in Caloocan.

The city stands to lose an entire barangay in the impending demolition, and matters are made worse with the coming barangay elections.

On Oct. 26, Santiago pleaded with Reyes-Gramzen to delay the demolition until Christmas on humanitarian grounds.

Reyes-Gramzen rejected the plea and maintained there was already a court order for the demolition.

The 14 houses were eventually demolished with the consent of the residents.

In an interview earlier, Reyes-Gramzen maintained her decision to have the place demolished came after years of futile negotiation with residents.

She said she had done all she could to come up with a compromise deal with residents but to no avail.

Marquez, Tinga agree to develop together disputed boundary land

By Christian V. Esguerra

PARAÑAQUE Mayor Joey Marquez and Taguig Mayor Sigfredo Tinga yesterday kissed and made up and agreed to develop together an area at the Parañaque-Taguig boundary, which both mayors earlier refused to include in their respective jurisdictions.

In a two-hour meeting at the Taguig municipal hall, Marquez and Tinga ended their dispute and agreed to join forces in rehabilitating the area and delivering basic services there.

The two mayors ordered their respective officials to ensure the delivery of basic services to the entire stretch of the East Service Road from the Sucat interchange in Parañaque up to the FTI compound in Taguig.

"At this point, the issue of jurisdiction (over the area) is not very important. We should coordinate our efforts to deliver services there," Marquez said in the meeting.

Both mayors also agreed to rid the area of illegal vendors and clean it up of garbage, which had remained uncollected while the mayors were fighting. They also pledged to provide police visibility in the area on a weekly basis.

The mayors said they would do all this on an alternating basis, with Marquez taking the first turn.

Yesterday, Marquez already instructed his men to remove hundreds of illegal vendors on the service road to make it more accessible to vehicles coming from Taguig and Parañaque going to the South Luzon Expressway.

Until Sunday, Parañaque would also be responsible for garbage collection on the entire stretch of the East Service Road. The city would also provide policemen and street sweepers in the area during the week.

Starting next Monday, Taguig will take its turn in maintaining cleanliness and peace and order in the area. The cycle would continue, finally ensuring that this unwanted piece of property would not go into decay.

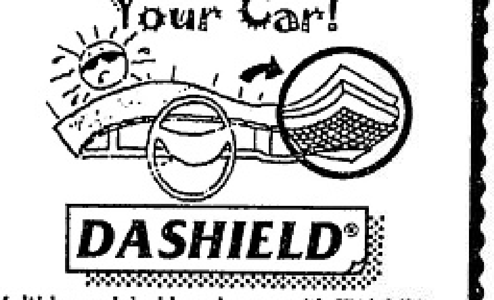
Earlier, residents near the area complained that illegal vendors have taken over this stretch of land, which has become a bottleneck for vehicles bound for the South Luzon Expressway coming from the FTI compound in Taguig. Motorists are usually stuck in traffic for about 45 minutes when they pass through the area.

The residents have also complained about the uncollected garbage in the area after both mayors of Taguig and Parañaque refused to take responsibility for collecting the garbage.

Marquez and Tinga also said they would meet with officials of the Philippine National Construction Corp. to discuss possible solutions to the traffic problem. The PNCC maintains both the South and North Luzon Expressways.

The mayors proposed to "acquire" a 2,000-square-meter portion of the PNCC compound in Parañaque and use it to widen the service road.

They are now preparing a memorandum of agreement to formalize their joint development efforts on the service road.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A lunch date with Mike Arroyo

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WOULD you believe First Gentleman Mike Arroyo did not know every nook and cranny of the presidential residence at the Malacañang Palace until last Sunday?

I found this out when Mr. Arroyo gave me a tour of the Palace proper, the building where the President holds office and Cabinet meetings, entertains official and personal guests, and lives with her family. I was invited by the presidential spouse to have lunch with him.

While he was escorting this writer on a tour of the Palace, Mr. Arroyo could not tell me who occupied a room we were about to enter or had just left. I asked him why he seemed ignorant of some of the rooms. He said it was the first time he entered some of them. Two members of the Palace domestic staff accompanied us on the tour and filled us in on the function of the rooms that Mr. Arroyo entered for the first time.

***

It was my first time to be shown the inner sanctum of the Palace. I had gone to Malacañang several times during the administrations of Marcos, Fidel V. Ramos and Erap. But my visits to the Palace in the past were limited to the office where the President received guests.

In the first few days of Erap in Malacañang, I was led to the study room where I waited for the newly elected president to emerge from entertaining visitors. I was then still on very goods terms with Erap, whom I've known when he was still a senator.

"How come you don't seem to know your house?" I asked the First Gentleman whom I met for the second time. The first time was in his office at the Lourdes T. Arroyo building in Makati when I interviewed him. That first meeting was short and hurried as both of us were about to start the day's work.

***

Mr. Arroyo said he confined himself to the matrimonial bedroom, the rooms of their children, the living room, the dining room and an anteroom that served as a small gym.

He said he made the offices within the Palace proper "off-limits" to him because he didn't want to get in the way of the work of the staff.

He said he's always at his office at the family-owned LTA building in Makati. He's only with the President during official functions where his presence is needed.

***

Touching on the purpose of the invitation to have lunch with him (GMA was in Camiguin last Sunday), Mr. Arroyo said: "Mon, I'd like to thank you for defending me in your column even if you hardly know me."

"Please be assured, Mon, that what you've written in my defense is accurate," he added. "I have never used my position to commit an irregularity."

Mr. Arroyo is one of the few personalities I know who go out of their way to show their appreciation to journalists who have written favorable articles about them.

***

My visit of course ended at the dining table where a simple lunch was served: rice, soup, boiled vegetables, fish and *bola-bola*. For dessert, we had sliced pineapple, watermelon and *manzanitas* or tiny apples.

Over lunch, I asked him about his wife's views on the current situation and her immediate plans in the wake of the coup rumors. I was given "I wouldn't know" or "I don't know" replies.

But he was very engaging in other non-controversial topics. The conversation also drifted to boys' talk. But I won't tell you what it was all about.

***

I left the Palace with a buttressed impression about the First Gentleman. Here is a guy who's trying to live a life of his own, to be as unobtrusive as possible, but is getting the brickbats because he happens to be the spouse of the most powerful official of the land.

I also saw his simplicity and candor. He showed me a contraption in a small room that served as a gym. The device exercises the legs, arms and the whole body at the same time. "I can't last a minute in that contraption," the obese man said.

He waxed sentimental when he showed me the room where he courted GMA when she was a teenage resident of the Palace at the time of President Diosdado Macapagal. There was a glimmer in his eyes when he said this.

"Mon, *napakalaki nitong Palasyo para sa akin*," he said during the tour.

That statement left the impression that he doesn't poke into the inner sanctum of his wife's territory.

DILG help sought vs illegal vendors

By Alcuin Papa

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority has asked the help of the Department of Interior and Local Government to deal with local officials and policemen suspected of protecting illegal vendors and maintaining illicit terminals in their areas.

Romy Enriquez, head of the MMDA-Special Action Unit, said the vendors and those maintaining illegal terminals on roads and side streets have "permits to operate" issued by barangay officials and policemen.

Enriquez said it would be futile for the MMDA to wage a campaign against vendors so long as corrupt officials are there to provide protection.

MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos said he has drafted a formal letter to DILG Secretary Joey Lina, asking the latter to impose the proper sanctions against erring law enforcers and local officials protecting the vendors.

A number of the illegal FX terminals operating in Quezon City are located on Quezon Avenue and North Triangle on Edsa.

"I have already notified Chairman (Benjamin) Abalos about the terminal on North Avenue which has been the cause of severe traffic congestion in the area," Enriquez said.

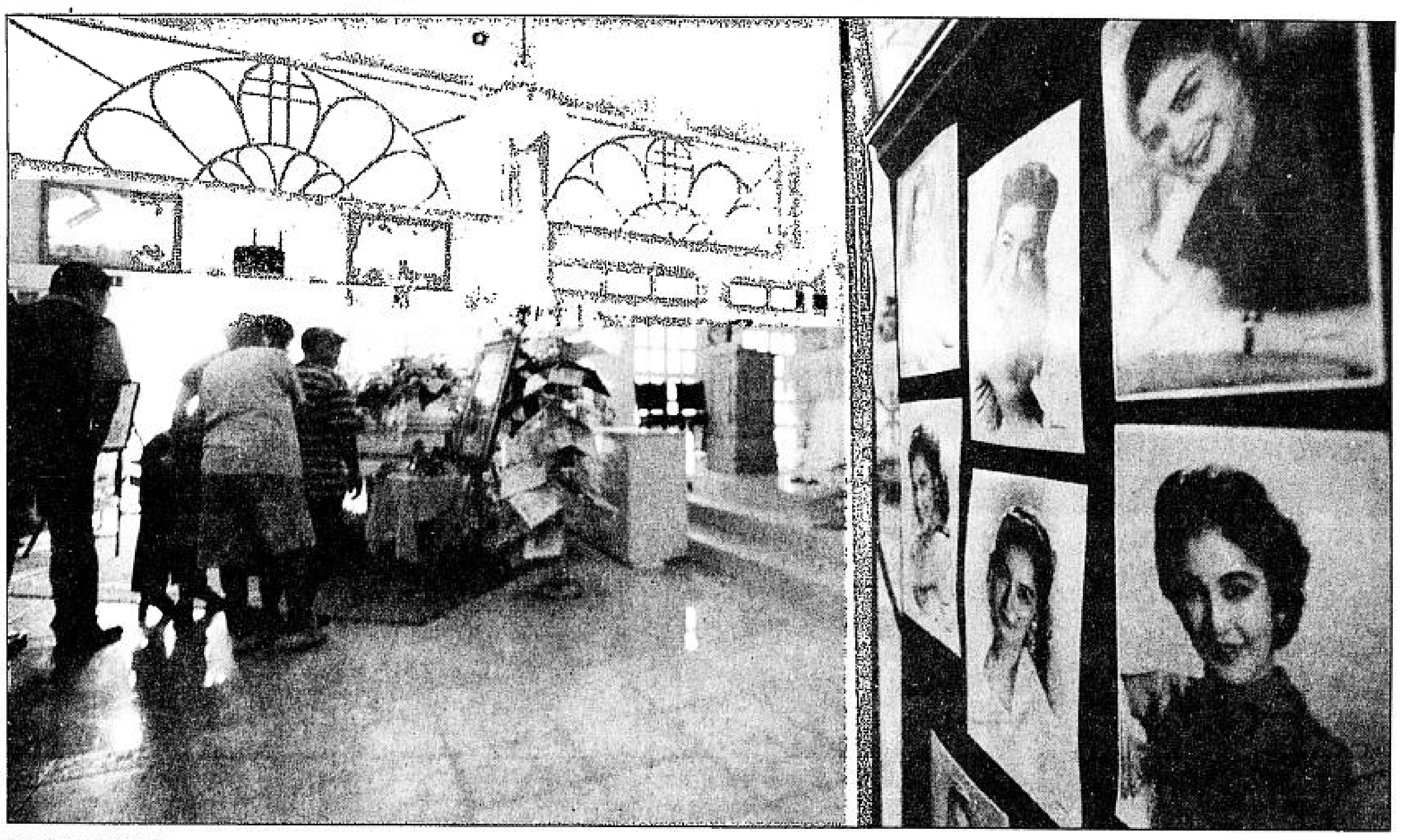
Traffic in the area is heaviest between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. because of the high volume of passengers from the Metro Rail Transit waiting for jeepney rides. Jeepneys also clog up the area to pick up passengers or wait for them at the terminals.

Enriquez added shuttle FX taxis that are waiting for passengers tend to occupy two lanes at a given time.

"We could not easily dismantle these terminals because they have documents to back up their claims," Enriquez said. "This practice should be stopped."

Last week, the MMDA cleared the stretch of Litex road in Batasan, Quezon City of illegal vendors and apprehended more than 200 of them.

Enriquez said they have identified a Major Ballesteros and his alleged deputy, surnamed Sanchez, as the alleged protectors of the illegal vendors.



LAST LOOK

JOAN BONDOC

Visitors take advantage of the early afternoon lull to pay their last respects to slain actress Nida Blanca at the White Plains chapel in Quezon City. Nida's only child, Katherine Torres, met the press later in the afternoon in the same chapel.

Two Bacoor barangay heads under investigation

TWO barangay chairs in Bacoor, Cavite are under investigation on suspicion that one of them sold untitled subdivision lots to squatters and the other pocketed the salaries of other barangay officials who were on leave.

Bacoor Mayor Jessie B. Castillo yesterday identified the suspects as Jose Silos of Queen's Row West and Reynaldo Palabrica of Queen's Row Central.

According to initial investigation, Silos pocketed the salaries of other officials in his barangay who were on leave, said a statement from Castillo's office. Silos also allegedly solicited money from his fellow barangay leaders for non-existent dead persons, Castillo said.

Palabrica is one of 10 people said to be involved in the illegal sale of subdivision lots to squatters, Castillo said.

The Bacoor mayor also accused the two of actively waging a misinformation campaign to muddle issues in the Cavite town of almost 500,000. "They are among my detractors who have made it their lifetime preoccupation to criticize whatever I do and say," the mayor said.

Sources in Bacoor said the two barangay leaders had misled a television reporter who was investigating the alleged continued operation of a closed dumpsite in Villa Esperanza in Barangay Molino III.

The two men had accompanied the TV reporter and his crew to a different dumpsite which the reporter had identified in his report as the Villa Esperanza garbage facility.

Castillo said majority of his constituents, mostly homeowners in Bacoor's more than 100 subdivisions, have been pressing him to seek the approval of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to reopen the dumpsite in Villa Esperanza.

"I must admit that we don't have a dumpsite to use right now, but the good news is that we are presently developing a new facility that will compost waste," the mayor said. "The new garbage site was already inspected and cleared by the DENR."

Cops to make Christmas shopping safe

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday said he has ordered the Western Police District to increase police visibility in the city's commercial centers to protect shoppers from petty criminals in the coming holidays.

The mayor said holdup men, snatchers, pickpockets, muggers and swindlers usually step up their activities during Christmas. Their activities, Atienza said, are hurting the efforts of city hall to promote Manila as a haven for shoppers.

Atienza reminded WPD director Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos Jr. that police presence is the best deterrent against criminals.

"We want them to feel that shopping in our city is an enjoyable, safe and hassle free-experience," the mayor said.

Among the commercial establishments the mayor wants closely guarded and monitored by the police are those in downtown Manila, particularly in the districts of Quiapo, Divisoria, Sta. Cruz and Binondo, and those in the Ermita-Malate tourist belt.

Thousands of shoppers daily flock to malls and sidewalk stalls that line Rizal Avenue, Quezon Boulevard and C.M. Recto Avenue.

The number is expected to increase with the approach of the holidays.

"Aside from the affordability and quality of consumer goods, we would be able to attract people to do their holiday shopping in Manila if their safety is assured," Atienza said.

The mayor also called on officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways to implement a 24-shift of workers to ensure the swift rehabilitation of portions of the Sergio Osmeña Sr. Highway (formerly South Superhighway).

Atienza complained that the DPWH and its contractors closed portions of the highway for repair last week without coordinating with City Hall and implementing a traffic re-routing scheme.

The DPWH said the repair work is expected to be finished by January.

The mayor said he would not tolerate any unnecessary delays in its completion.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, November 13, 2001
32nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Wis 2:23—3:9**
Gospel: **Lk 17:7-10**

The Lord said, "Who among you would say to your servant coming in from the fields after plowing or tending sheep: 'Come at once and sit down at table'? No, you tell him: 'Prepare my dinner. Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink; you can eat and drink afterwards.' Do you thank this servant for doing what you commanded? So for you. When you have done all that you have been told to do, you must say: 'We are no more than servants; we have only done our duty.'"

Commentary:

Does a servant do a duty or a favor to the Master? Christianity is very different from other beliefs. In other religions, it is the human person who strives to seek God and go to him. If the person succeeds, it is a credit to human ingenuity and effort. In Christianity, it is God who comes down to us with his favors. God finds us. We allow ourselves to be found. It is given as grace, a favor, unsolicited. By grace, we are called to be servants. Jesus is the Master. In his example, we see that the reason for our existence is to serve. Thus in serving we are simply fulfilling the gift of God working in us.

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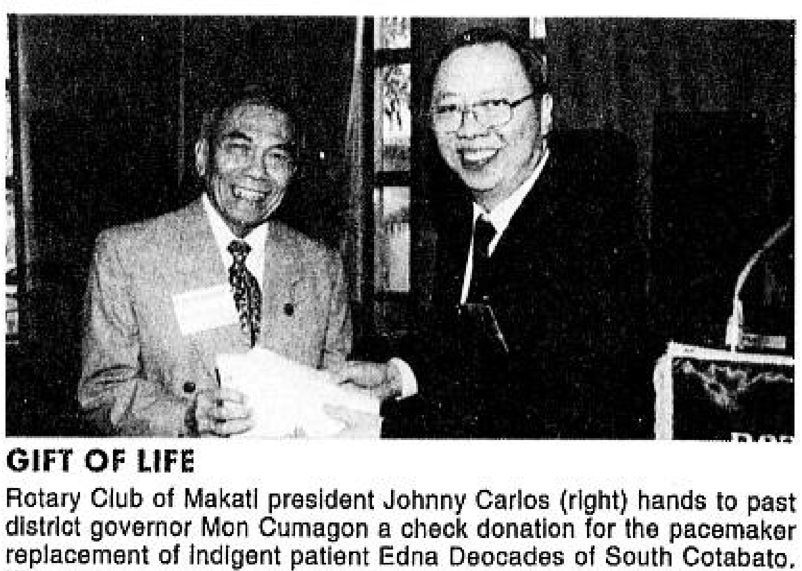
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Duties and responsibilities of a clerk of court— The Clerk of Court is an important functionary of the judiciary. His administrative functions are vital to prompt and sound administration of justice. He plays a key role in the court. He cannot be allowed to slacken on his job as his office is the hub of adjudicative and administrative orders, processes and concerns. He is the administrative assistance of the presiding judge whose duty is to assist in the management of the calendar of the court and in all other matters not involving the discretion or judgment of the judge. In the case at bar, respondent clerk of court took upon himself the performance of a judicial function, one that necessarily involves the exercise of judicial discretion or judgment. He did so without the prior order and authority of the trial court and in complete disregard of the rights of the accused. By ordering the arrest of accused, respondent performed a function not vested in him by law. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Per Curiam, Escañan v. Monterola, A.M. No. P-99-1347, February 6, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera

NEGOPOWER

Sen. Loren Legarda (left) and Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos (right) lead guests in the ceremonial ribbon-cutting during the opening of the Negopower trade fair at the SM Megatrade Hall, which showcases export products. With them are Trade Undersecretary Nellie Villafuerte, Valenzuela Mayor Bobbit Carlos, Pasig Vice Mayor Lorna Bernardo and businessmen.



GIFT OF LIFE

Rotary Club of Makati president Johnny Carlos (right) hands to past district governor Mon Cumagon a check donation for the pacemaker replacement of indigent patient Edna Deocades of South Cotabato. This is the Rotary Club of Makati's 45th pacemaker sponsorship under Heartbeat International's Gift of New Life program.

METROBRIEFS

Raped

MARILAO policemen SPO1 Narciso Carangan and PO1 Manuel Mendoza were arrested for allegedly raping two girls, aged 16 and 17, who worked as maids for the owners of a videoke restaurant in Marilao, Bulacan. NBI Director Reynaldo G. Wycoco said the suspects raped the girls in a motel in Marilao at dawn of Nov. 4. The suspects were arrested Nov. 8 when they went back to the videoke bar and again tried to force the two girls into their van. NBI agents posted near the bar saw the incident and arrested the suspects who are now facing charges of rape and attempted forcible abduction, Wycoco said. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Shot dead

DRIVER Gerardo Pagsunurin, 32, of Quezon City died after one of three suspected snatchers shot him in the eye during a botched robbery in a passenger jeepney in Pasay City, police said. The jeepney (DHE 227) was traveling along F.B. Harrison Street about 7 p.m. Sunday when three men boarded the vehicle near Maginhawa Street and tried to snatch the necklace of a passenger, who resisted. One of the suspects was about to shoot the passenger, who warded off the gun which went off and hit Pagsunurin in the left eye, police said. The suspects escaped.

Christian V. Esguerra

Busted

FOURTEEN suspected drug pushers and users were arrested in Makati and found with about 14 grams of shabu on them, police said. Insp. Gary Reyes, chief of the Makati Police Drug Enforcement Unit, identified five of the suspects as Erwin Aceremo, Susan Reyes, Mauricio Marcelo, Cesar Martin and Rico Mollio, who were arrested Sunday in a drug den in Barangay West Rembo, Makati. Police found on them three grams of shabu and shabu paraphernalia. Suspected pushers Alvin Alvarez, Ariel Posecion, Ronald de la Cruz and Delfin Felipe were arrested later, also in West Rembo, police said. They were found with five grams of shabu, police added. In Barangay Kaunlaran, suspected pushers Gregorio Basa, Joselina Guevarra, Danilo Montalbo, Edgar Frias and Angelina Angeles were arrested and found with six grams of shabu, police said. All are detained at the Makati City Jail and were charged with violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act. *Alcuin Papa*

Shootout

COUSINS Ronald and Sonny Villar were seriously injured in a gun battle with local police in Antipolo City, police said. The two were shot after allegedly robbing Ruben Cortez and Marian Pimentel, employees of a gasoline station on Marcos Highway. Police found on the suspects a .22 magnum revolver, a fan knife and a .38 homemade revolver. Their companions—security guard Jose Elanor Anuncio, of Mayamot, Antipolo City, and Maricel Villamor—were also arrested. Supt. Reynaldo Macalalad said members of the Antipolo police patrol unit spotted the suspects on board motorcycles shortly after the robbery. The suspects were about to deposit the P110,000 they allegedly stole at a local bank. Macalalad said police tried to arrest the suspects after a brief chase, but the suspects shot at them, triggering the shootout. *Nelson Forte Flores*

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2	KAMO
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS
4	GHOST OF MARS
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6	TRIP
7	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
8	DON'T SAY A WORD

SM CENTERPOINT
7149532-7161416

1	TRIP
2	DON'T SAY A WORD
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS
4	DOWN TO EARTH
5	THE ONE
6	KAMO
7	GHOST OF MARS
8	LEGALLY BLONDE
9	DOS EKIS
10	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350149

1	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
2	DOWN TO EARTH
3	LEGALLY BLONDE
4	JEEPERS CREEPERS
5	DOS EKIS
6	TRIP
7	THE ONE
8	DON'T SAY A WORD
9	TRIP
10	GHOST OF MARS
11	KAMO
12	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	JEEPERS CREEPERS
2	DON'T SAY A WORD
3	LEGALLY BLONDE
4	THE ONE
5	GHOST OF MARS
6	THE ONE
7	DOWN TO EARTH
8	KAMO
9	TRIP
10	TRIP
11	AMERICAN PIE 2
12	DOS EKIS

SM MEGAMALL
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1	DOWN TO EARTH
2	LEGALLY BLONDE
3	THE ONE
4	JEEPERS CREEPERS
5	DON'T SAY A WORD
6	GHOST OF MARS
7	KAMO
8	AMERICAN PIE 2
9	TRIP
10	THE ONE
11	DOS EKIS
12	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM TUTUBAN
2514302

1	THE ONE
2	DOS EKIS
3	TRIP
4	JEEPERS CREEPERS

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	GHOST OF MARS
2	LEGALLY BLONDE
3	TRIP
4	DOS EKIS
5	DON'T SAY A WORD
6	JEEPERS CREEPERS
7	THE ONE
8	THE ONE
9	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
10	AMERICAN PIE 2
11	KAMO
12	TRIP

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
2	GHOST OF MARS
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS
4	DON'T SAY A WORD
5	DOS EKIS
6	DOWN TO EARTH
7	TRIP
8	THE ONE
9	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
10	KAMO

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L
8820505

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM CEBU
2313876

1	THE ONE
2	LEGALLY BLONDE
3	DOWN TO EARTH
4	HIYAS SA PARAISO
5	TRIP
6	DOS EKIS
7	AMERICAN PIE 2

SM ILOILO
3309422

1	DOWN TOEARTH
2	CLOSED
3	THE ONE
4	DOS EKIS
5	LEGALLY BLONDE
6	AMERICAN PIE 2
7	CLOSED
8	TRIP

SM PAMPANGA
7120015

1	THE ONE
2	TRAINING DAY
3	AMERICAN PIE 2
4	DOS EKIS
5	DOWN TO EARTH
6	TRIP

SM SUCAT
8264975

1	JEEPERS CREEPERS
2	DOS EKIS
3	THE ONE
4	TRIP

SM DAVAO

1
2
3
4
5
6

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2	THE ONE	
3	KAMO	
4	JEEPERS CREEPERS	

GLORIETTA 4

1	JEEPERS CREEPERS	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	THE ONE	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	THE ONE THX	in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	BUTTERFLY'S TONGUE (Art Film)	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	DOWN TO EARTH	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	DON'T SAY A WORD	in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	LEGALLY BLONDE	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	JEEPERS CREEPERS	in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	TRIP	in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	THE ONE	in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	SNAPSHOTS & PORTRAITS NOV. 10, 16, 17 - 8 PM NOV. 11, 18 - 3 PM Onstage	

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	THE ONE THX	in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	THE ONE	in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	TRIP	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	DON'T SAY A WORD	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	GHOST OF MARS
2 (SDDS)	THE ONE
3 (DTS)	LEGALLY BLONDE
4 GOLD (DTS)	DON'T SAY A WORD
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	AMERICAN PIE 2
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE ONE
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	JEEPERS CREEPERS
8	DOS EKIS
9	TRIP
10	TRIP

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	TRIP
2	JEEPERS CREEPERS
3	KAMO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE ONE
5	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

METROPOLIS star
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
2	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
3	TRIP
4	DOS EKIS
5	JEEPERS CREEPERS
6	THE ONE
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2011 to13

1	THE ONE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	DOS EKIS
2	FAST & FURIOUS

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	TRIP
2	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
3	THE ONE

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	TRIP
A	KAMO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3	KAMO
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	TRIP
5	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
6	TRIP
7 (DTS)	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
8 (SDDS)	GHOST OF MARS
9 (DOLBY)	JEEPERS CREEPERS

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	THE ONE

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	TRIP
2	TRIP
3	TRIP
4 (SDDS)	THE ONE
5	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
6 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
7 (DTS)	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
8	GHOST OF MARS
9	DOS EKIS

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
4	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
5 (SDDS)	RESERVE
6	TRIP
7 (DOLBY)	JEEPERS CREEPERS
8	DOS EKIS

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	TRIP
2	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
5 (SDDS)	THE ONE

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	THE ONE

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	TRIP

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	KAMO
Lords	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
Jennet	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	TRIP

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	RESERVE
2	THE ONE
3	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	THE ONE
2	TRIP

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	TRIP
2	KAMO
3	
4	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	ROSARIO 18
2	TRIP
3 (DTS)	THE ONE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE BODY
2 (DTS)	TRIP
3 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
4	TRAINING DAY

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	TRIP
2 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
3 (DTS)	TRAINING DAY
4	TRIP

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	LEGALLY BLONDE
2	TRIP
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE ONE
2	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
3	KAMO
4 (DTS)	TRIP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3 (DTS)	TRAINING DAY
4	ROSARIO 18
5	SAKIM

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	SAKIM

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	SAKIM

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	DON'T SAY A WORD
2	GHOST OF MARS
3	HIYAS

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	TRIP
2	THE ONE
3	TRAINING DAY

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4800

1 (DTS)	TRIP
2 (DTS)	THE ONE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	CLOSED

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	TRIP
2	ROSARIO 18
3	SAKIM

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	DOS EKIS
2	TRIP
3	DON'T SAY A WORD
4	HOLE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	TRAINING DAY
2	ROSARIO 18
3	SOON TO OPEN
4 (DTS ES)	THE ONE

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1 THX	THE ONE
2	THE ONE
3	TRIP
4	DON'T SAY A WORD
5	JEEPERS CREEPERS
6	AMERICAN PIE 2
7	TRAINING DAY
8	LEGALLY BLONDE
9	DOWN TO EARTH
10	GHOST OF MARS

ERMITA
536-7808 TO 12

1	THE ONE
2	LEGALLY BLONDE
3	DOWN TO EARTH
4	GHOST OF MARS
5	TRIP
6	JEEPERS CREEPERS
7	DON'T SAY A WORD

NOVALICHES
935-3229 TO 31

1	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3	TRIP
4	THE ONE
5	JEEPERS CREEPERS
6	JEEPERS CREEPERS
7	DON'T SAY A WORD
8	THE ONE

IMUS
(046) 471-8188

1	THE ONE
2	TRIP
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS
4	DON'T SAY A WORD
5	GHOST OF MARS
6	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453

1	AMERICAN PIE 2
2	TRAINING DAY
3	DOS EKIS
4	GHOST OF MARS
5	THE BODY
6	JAY & SILENT BOB STRIKES

SOON TO OPEN
METRO EAST
SAN FERNANDO PAMPANGA
ILOILO

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	DOS EKIS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TRIP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE ONE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	GHOST OF MARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	JEEPERS CREEPERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KAMO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	DON'T SAY A WORD
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	THE ONE
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SCORPIO NIGHTS 2 / NIGHT JOB
ODEON	THE ONE
ODEON-2	TEMPTRESS AFFAIR
ROBEN	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	KISS OF THE DRAGON / SPOT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
REMAR	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
REMAR-2	SAKIM SA PAG IBIG
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	TRIP
B	THE ONE
C	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL
CINEMA-2	THE ONE
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SANGGANO'T SANGGAGO
CINEMA-2	TRIP
CINEMA-3	DOS EKIS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	KAMO
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	GHOST OF MARS
CINEMA-6	HIYAS
CINEMA-7	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
CINEMA-8	TRIP
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	THE ONE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE ONE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	LEGALLY BLONDE
CINEMA-12	JEEPERS CREEPERS
CINEMA-14	DON'T SAY A WORD
CINEMA-15	TRIP
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	JEEPERS CREEPERS
CINEMA-2	DOWN TO EARTH
CINEMA-3	LEGALLY BLONDE
CINEMA-4	DON'T SAY A WORD
CINEMA-5	TRAINING DAY
CINEMA-6	THE ONE
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

'Potter' ticket sales 'historical'

LOS ANGELES—Tickets to "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" already are vanishing a week before the movie debuts.

Although most box-office outlets decline to disclose totals, they said the tickets were selling faster than any other film this year. In London, theaters have already sold nearly 500,000 advance tickets.

Kim Holt, spokeswoman for Movietickets.com, said the Potter sales were already five times higher than the company's previous record holder, "Pearl Harbor."

"It's at a historic level," she said.

The $125-million movie, about a mistreated orphan who embarks on an adventure after learning he has magical powers, is set to open Nov. 16. Theaters began selling advance opening-weekend tickets on Nov. 2.

"Most advance tickets are bought in pairs, and in this case every time somebody buys tickets it's four to five tickets," said Rich King, spokesperson for AMC Theaters which has 2,792 screens in the US. "That tells us that a whole lot of families are planning to attend the first weekend together."

Sales this early are unusual, he added. "Most advance ticket sales usually peak two to three days before the show," he said. "It's never anything like this."

Intertops, the Internet sports betting site, set 11-to-25 odds that "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" will break the $72.1-million three-day, opening-weekend box-office record set by "Jurassic Park: The Lost World" in 1997. It also set 1-to-2 odds that the film will break or tie the record for fastest to earn $100 million (five days, set by "Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace" in 1999). *AP*

E.B. White classic now on video

"CHARLOTTE'S WEB," E. B. White's timeless children's story, is now a colorful animated musical on video.

Children and their elders will laugh and sing along as Charlotte the Spider teaches Wilbur the Pig, Templeton the Rat and other barnyard animals lessons in friendship, trust and love.

"Charlotte's Web" on video is distributed exclusively MagnaVision Home Video.

"Charlotte's Web" is sponsored by Sony Cinema, together with Center for Pop Music Philippines, Jack 'n' Jill Chiz Curls, Wiggles, Rainbow Bites and Knotts Icee Pop.

Angara with Boy

SEN. Edgardo Angara appears in "Private Conversations with Boy Abunda" on Wednesday, Nov. 14, 9-10 p.m., on ANC News Channel.

Angara talks on the last days of the Estrada presidency, the impeachment proceedings, his stint as Estrada's executive secretary, his new life as opposition senator, and the anti-piracy bills he is proposing, among others.

Nikka Santos is executive producer of "Private Conversations."

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Cinemanila 2001 unreels from Dec. 7 to 16

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE CINEMANILA International Film Festival has had a so-so first two years, but its third edition from Dec. 7 to 16 could be better. This is because its sponsor is the city of Makati, which has more resources with which to support the country's only international filmfest. We shall see. . .

Cinemanila 2001 will be held at the Glorietta and Greenbelt cinema complexes. Some 80 films will be screened in various sections, like World Cinema, Asian Cinema, Philippine Cinema and Young Cinema (Digital Productions).

Awards at stake: the Lino Brocka award (grand prize), grand jury prize, best actor and actress, NETPAC/FIPRESCI award (critics' prize), best short film, best documentary, and the Ishmael Bernal award for best Filipino short film.

Citations will also be given to Filipino-American film talents who have made outstanding contributions in the field.

Among the movies to be shown is **Regina Ziegler**'s "Erotic Tales," a series of 30-minute films shot in 35 mm, each filmed by a different director of international origin.

Some of the erotic "short stories" are: "The Dutch Master" by **Susan Seidelman**, starring **Mira Sorvino**. "Wet" by **Bob Rafelson**. "Vroom Vroom Vroom" directed by **Melvin Van Peebles**. "The Cloud Door" by **Mani Kaul** of India. "The Insatiable Mrs. Kirsch" by **Ken Russel.** "Touch Me" by Australian **Paul Co.** "Sweeties" by Italian **Cinzia Torrini**. "Hotel Paradise" by **Nicholas Roeg** of the UK. "Devilish Education" by **Janus Majewski** (Poland). "Sambolico" by **Mika Kaurismaki** (Finland/Brazil). "Elephants Never Forget" by **Delthler Buck** (Germany). "The Waiting Room" by **Jos Stelling** (The Netherlands).

Cinemanila 2001 has 15 films in competition, 15 for exhibition, 30 short films and 10 digital movies. Also in focus are works by Filipino independent filmmakers. The awards night is on Dec. 16. The Cinemanila filmfest was conceived by filmamaker **Tikoy Aguiluz**.

'Pointblank'

CES Drilon and the staffers of the ANC show "Pointblank" are greatly heartened by the program's Best TV Talk Show honor from the Catholic Mass Media Awards.

The 11 p.m. show features Drilon conducting discussions and debates between opposing parties, utilizing ABS-CBN's technological capabilities for remote, live telecasting.

The executive producer is **Beth Raymundo**, and **David Celdron** is the Director of ANC's Current Affairs Division.

'West Wing'

MEANWHILE, American TV's political drama, "The West Wing" recently won more than its share of trophies at the 53rd Emmy Awards. The show got 18 nominations and was honored with eight statuettes in various categories, including Best Drama and Directing.

Best Supporting Actor was **Bradley Whitford**, who plays Deputy Chief of Staff **Josh Lyman. Allison Janney** (Press, Secretary **CJ Cregg**) won her second trophy in two consecutive years in the Best Supporting Actress in a Drama category.

"The West Wing" is seen locally on Studio23.

'Ibong Adarna'

GATIMPALA Theater Foundations production of "Ibong Adarna" will be staged at the AFP Theater on Nov. 16, 17; 18 and 20, at the RFC Cinema/Theater in Las Piñas on Nov. 23-25, and the ACX Auditorium at Paco Catholic School on Dec. 1 and 2. Call 899-525.

"Ibong Adarna" stars include movie actor and dancer **Wowie de Guzman**, who is making his stage debut by way of this production. He plays the King's youngest son, and gets to perform an Asian dance. The young prince's love interest, Maria Blanca, is alternately played by **Tintin Arnaldo** and **Paula Ferrer**.

Warm reception

WORD has reached us from Japan that **Rory B. Quintos**' "Anak" was warmly received by viewers during the recent 14th Tokyo International Women's Film Festival. In addition, Rory's newfound Japanese friends feted her on her birthday, making her stay in Japan extra special.

Ces Drilon drives a taxi, detonates bombs

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

WHEN you see how composed and serious **Ces Drilon** is on TV, you might find it hard to believe that she can be kooky when she wants to be.

Ces and I bump into each other every so often but we started becoming close to each other only recently. What started our friendship is a "dream pillow" which she featured in her top-rating program, "Pipol."

I texted her one day asking where I could buy the pillow. To my surprise she gave me two dream pillows. "I have sleeping problems," I kidded her. "I sleep with the wrong men. Maybe the pillow will help." From then on, we would text each other even way past midnight.

Ces and her staff never run out of brilliant ideas for "Pipol." The program will mark its second year with a special anniversary show on Nov. 15 (5:30 p.m. early edition and 11:30 p.m. producer's cut) on ABS-CBN 2.

Ces will assume different jobs, from driving a taxi in the streets of Metro Manila, to being a clown at a fair in Laguna and a bomb squad member of the Makati Police SWAT.

Ces had first-hand experience in detonating two bombs as part of her training as a bomb technician. While she was taping the segment with the SWAT, she texted me, "I'm surrounded by hunks here!"

I texted back: "Save 1 for me please!" She really hanged out with the SWAT men while waiting for an emergency to happen.

But the most unforgettable job she had to do was being a taxi driver. "I wore a cap and shades so they hardly recognize me, athough some *colegialas* did and they believed me when I said I was doing it as a sideline because I didn't earn enough."

She can now empathize with cab drivers who are picky about the routes they take. "It's so hard to earn your boundary," she said. "I was short by P40. Even if I drove for 24 hours, I still wasn't able to hit the boundary. It's no joke to be a cab driver. At the end of the day, your whole body hurts and what you make is not even enough for your basic needs."

On a lighter note, she said she had fun driving couples to motels. "The moment they got into the cab they were so engrossed with each other so there was no way they would even bother to check out who was driving. In hushed tones, they gave me directions and I felt they were headed for a motel. I was a bit nervous and at the same time I had to stop myself from laughing."

Liezl"s exhibit

CHECK out **Albert** and **Liezl Martinez**'s furniture exhibit at SM Megatrade Hall, Nov. 9-18. They call it "Whatta Relief Outdoor Furniture."

My *kumareng* Liezl says of the furniture material: "It looks and feels like rattan but it's made out of polyveen so it will not fade or rot."

With Albert and Liezl's impeccable taste, you can be sure their furniture is a good buy.

Dingdong's denial

IN the spirit of fair play, allow me to share with you the other side of the **Dingdong Dantes-Chinna Jocson** whatchamacallit romance. From the e-mail:

"Ms Carvajal,

"You have very very good sources and I know you are sworn to secrecy. I won't ask you to tell me who but you might be delighted to know that my friend Dingdong is starting to be bothered about this.

"I'm not writing 'cause he told me to but since everybody seems to be contributing freely, I think there are a few things you should know. Dingdong's denial or silence over this issue is mainly because of some things such as 1. Career. His love team with **Antoinette (Taus)** is still a main factor in his career. You know very well that to tell the fans bluntly that he has been dating another girl for would cause them heartbreak or a slump in his career. 2. Privacy. He has worked so hard to keep the relationship private and it has been for the longest time . . . and I think he plans to maintain the low profile. 3. Publicity. Any writeup, whether good or bad, is to his advantage, not to the advantage of Chinna who moves in a different world.

"Now why am I telling you this? And I feel you are confused as to which side I am on. Like any friend, I am finding it hard to tell Dingdong to fix things.

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

DRILON

Loren proposes TV rating code

SENATE majority leader Loren Legarda has proposed the creation of a "Television Violence Rating Code" that will formulate the rules for rating the level of violence in TV programming.

Said code will also set the rules for the broadcast and cable system's transmission of signals containing specifications for blocking violent programming.

Legarda said the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has a system of classifying and rating TV programs and movies.

But she noted that neither the MTRCB nor the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) provides rating for violence in TV programs.

"As a mother of an eight-year-old and an 11-year-old, I am really concerned with the quality of programs that the children are watching on TV," Legarda explained. "Just like any other working parent today, my duties as a public official give me less time to watch TV with my sons. Of course, my two boys are fond of cartoons with robots and super heroes but it is sometimes difficult to categorize which of these are entertaining and which are violent," Legarda stated.

Under Senate Bill 703 or the "Children's Media Protection Act," the MTRCB and NTC shall ensure that no violent programs shall be aired from 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

This ensures that only children-friendly programs are aired on TV while the parents are not home.

"TV today is no longer a mere past time, it is already a part and parcel of our daily routine. In a very busy society like ours, TV often becomes the children's 'nanny' while their parents are at work. Given this situation, we should secure ways on how to make TV viewing a fun and learning experience. I understand how influential media is and let us not allow it to destroy our children's behavior and values," Legarda said.

Legarda was installed recently as the official spokesperson for the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television, an organization that advocates responsible and quality TV programming for children.

She spent nearly 20 years in broadcasting before she was elected to the senate. She has received numerous citations for her work as a TV host and producer and was once named broadcaster of the year by her colleagues in the industry.

Her designation as official spokesperson of SEAFCTV brings her full circle in her career in the TV industry.

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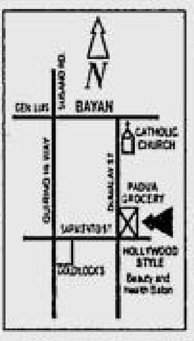

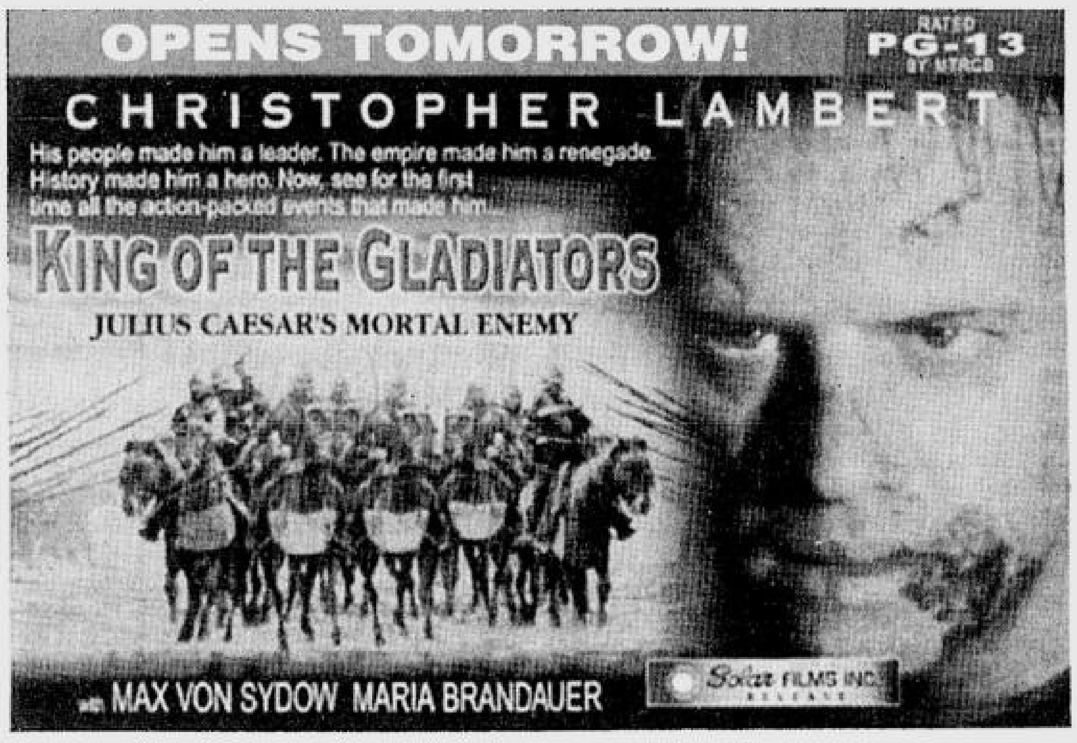
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DON'T SAY A WORD - P 13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	TRAINING DAY - R 18 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	THE ONE - P 13 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

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T-bill yields slide across the board

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

YIELDS of treasury bills across all maturities finally eased yesterday by nearly half a percentage point for the longer-dated debt notes, while the benchmark 91-day treasury rate was kept at single-digit after two straight weeks of rejection and four straight weeks of inching up.

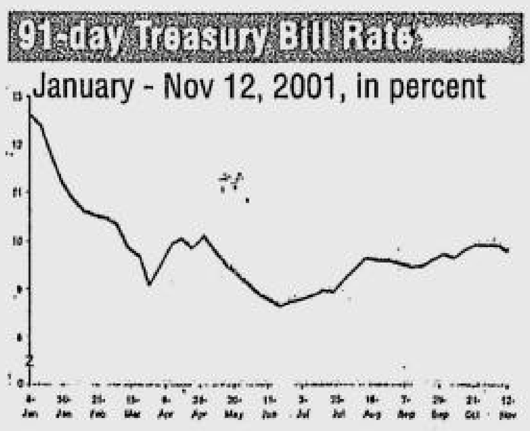
The 91-day rate went down by 10.7 basis points to 9.811 percent, while the yields of the six-month and one-year notes fell by 47.7 points to 11.702 percent and by 46 points to 12.602 percent.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said he was optimistic that the benchmark 91-day treasury would trend down close to 9 percent by year's end, contradicting a sentiment of fixed-income traders who said that the decline in the government's borrowing rate was not sustainable.

Traders cited a lingering concern that the Macapagal administration would exceed its P145-billion budget deficit target that, in turn, would prompt the government to run to the market for additional cash to plug the revenue shortfall.

"The market will be proven wrong because we can contain the deficit. But I can't blame their skepticism because the previous government had failed to rein in the deficit and we inherited the market's lack of confidence," Edeza said.

91-day Treasury Bill Rate



SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, BUREAU OF TREASURY

Still, the national treasurer pointed out that the financial market was awash with liquidity, judging from the volume of offers that flooded yesterday's auction.

The government was able to raise P3.5 billion yesterday from offers exceeding P12 billion for the three tenors.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' decision last week to cut overnight rates by half a percentage point and to revive the tiering system on overnight borrowing had pushed banks to shift their money back to government securities from the central bank's vaults.

"I think the market is returning to normal and in the coming weeks, specially once the impact of a P21-billion retail treasury bond issue had subsided, we would see rates to continue declining," Edeza said.

In the first quarter next year, the Bureau of Treasury had announced that the government would issue P28 billion worth of treasury bonds and bills every month from January to March.

The plan, based on the borrowing program of the Treasury, was to raise P4 billion a week from the weekly auction of treasuries.

"If we prove that we could contain the deficit this year, we would have an easier time next year. They would have more belief and more confidence that we could rein in the deficit," the treasurer said.

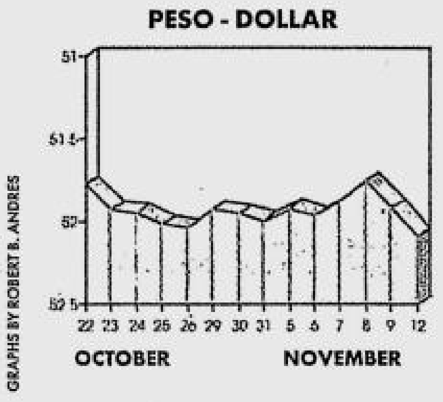
Edeza said the government was already winding up its borrowings, particularly the longer-dated treasuries for this year and would focus on short-term instruments.

He also announced that so far, the Treasury has advanced P10 billion to National Power Corp. and would extend another P1 billion in loans next year.

Edeza said the power firm had settled P800 million of its P4.5 billion in advances last September.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

P 52.09 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Nov. 12, 2001

Y 120.58 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Nov. 12, 2001

GOLD:$278/278.50
per ounce Hong Kong,
Nov. 12, 2001

Nov. 12, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.117943	1.000000	51.7860
Japan	Yen	0.009289	0.008309	0.4303
United Kingdom	Pound	1.628396	1.456600	75.4315
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.143337	0.128215	6.6397
Switzerland	Franc	0.682421	0.610426	31.6115
Canada	Dollar	0.697406	0.623830	32.3057
Singapore	Dollar	0.613748	0.548998	28.4304
Australia	Dollar	0.575073	0.514403	26.6389
Bahrain	Dinar	2.965524	2.652661	137.3707
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.298119	0.266667	13.8096
Brunei	Dollar	0.614086	0.549300	28.4460
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000096	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025145	0.022492	1.1648
UAE	Dirham	0.304451	0.272331	14.1029
Korea	Won	0.000879	0.000786	0.0407
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.894500	46.3226
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.457351	23.6844
France	Franc	0.152450	0.136366	7.0618
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.405906	21.0202
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.065006	3.3664
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022174	1.1483
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000462	0.0239
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.150444	7.7909
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004462	0.2311
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005376	0.2784
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022174	1.1483
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.135781	58.8176

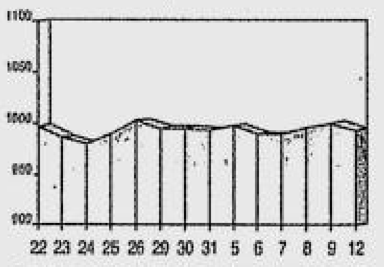
STOCK MARKET

Shares fall 0.7%

SHARE prices fell 0.7 percent yesterday as poor profit growth prospects led to foreign selling of blue chips led by Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), brokers said.

"With some companies bound for a downgrade after their poor earnings, you should see (price-earnings ratios) going up, and that justifies a downward trend for the key index," said Gene Gabriel of DBS Vickers Securities.

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B4)

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index lost 6.56 points to 993.23.

The broader All Shares Index slid 3.88 points to 654.41 after declining 2.33 points Friday to 658.29. Losers beat gainers 33 to 8, with 40 issues unchanged.

"Concerns on particular companies such as Meralco (Manila Electric Co.) have overshadowed the prospects of a decline in treasury bill rates after the central bank rate cut" last week, said Jose Vistan, analyst at AB Capital Securities.

Turnover fell to 261 million shares worth P325 million compared with 266 million shares worth P413 million traded on Friday.

Foreign funds led the selloff of Meralco scrip, said Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities.

Reports from AFP and AP

Traders do odd things, await bull market

TRADERS on the Philippine Stock Exchange—home to Asia's shortest trading day—were always free to spend their afternoons golfing.

But now many of them are using their afternoons training for new jobs or finding ways to make ends meet.

The Philippine stock exchange has turned in Asia's worst performance so far in 2001, the main index taking a 30-percent nosedive to rest near 10-year lows.

Foreign brokerages are closing left and right, poor investor confidence translating into paper-thin volume.

Day trade has all but ended, brokers say.

"There are days when I don't know where to get my parking or lunch money," Alejandro Yu, a 20-year veteran of the Philippine stock market, told Reuters.

"We're losing money on a daily basis. We used to have 10 or 12 phones here. Now we have six and we're thinking of going down to four," he said.

"I have another business, in retail plumbing, so I'm OK . . . but we're hoping it (the market) will pick up."

Few analysts are willing to predict when a pickup will come for the chronically oversold index, now in its ninth month of a downtrend.

Or when volumes will recover.

"It seems to be a host of reasons for poor liquidity . . . lack of political confidence . . . peace and order," Yu said.

The benchmark index began dropping shortly after President Macapagal-Arroyo swept to office in January after a people power revolt ousted her predecessor Joseph Estrada.

The index's relative strength indicator (RSI) reading—a measure of how oversold or overbought it is—has been scraping along the oversold 30 mark since then.

On Friday, the composite index ended up 3.77 points at 999.79 in trade worth P413.35 million. The index's life high is 3,447.60, a lofty figure reached early in 1997 just months before the Asian crisis sent it tumbling.

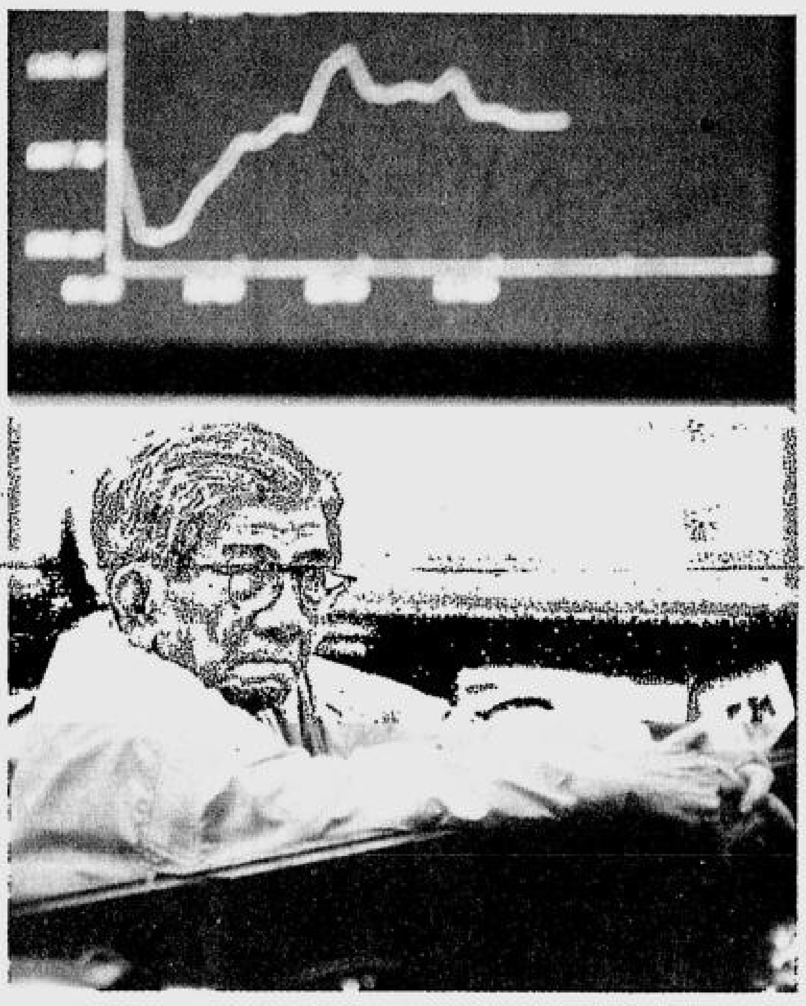
Chronic problems with decades-old Muslim rebellion in the country's South have added to problems of shrinking exports to the Philippines' biggest trading partners, traders say. Stubborn coup rumors have added another layer of gloom, too.

But some traders say things never really recovered after the Asian financial crisis.

"The yuppies lost their shirts in '97," one said.

Half the booths on the trading floor last week were empty or

TRADERS/ B2



A STOCK trader waits for customers to place their orders by phone on the floor of the Philippine Stock Exchange Nov. 9 as the graph behind him illustrates the sluggish performance of the local stock market.

Ayala to open part of 2 retail centers next month

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

PREMIER property developer Ayala Land Inc. will jumpstart the operations of two new retail centers this December in time for a seasonally robust Christmas consumer spending.

In an interview, ALI assistant vice president Rowena Tomeldan said that scheduled for soft opening next month are the 8,000-square-meter "Metropoint," a retail center connected to the MRT station at the corner of Edsa and Taft Avenue, and the first phase of the 30,000-square-meter redevelopment of Greenbelt in Makati.

ALI, however, is not expected to reap significant additional rental income from these centers until next year when both have been fully occupied.

ALI officials did not give an estimate as to how much additional revenue would be contributed by these new developments compared with the company's close to 500,000 square meters of rental portfolio.

Tomeldan said Metropoint in Pasay City would likely be fully

AYALA/ B2

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CONFIDENCE IN RP MARKET

SM, Keppel putting up high-end shopping center

THE COUNTRY'S largest mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc. yesterday said it would open a high-end shopping center in Ortigas, Pasig in a joint venture with Keppel Land Ltd. of Singapore.

The project is SM Prime's first venture in the high-end shopping segment after developing 11 malls across the nation that cater mostly to the lower- and middle-income classes. News of the project boosted the company's stock yesterday.

Senior vice president Jose Sio said the 2-hectare SM-Keppel shopping mall would open before the end of the year.

"It's a 2-hectare property. The SM-Keppel Retail Podium will have high-end tenant outlets. It's not exactly a mall because it does not have cinemas," Sio said.

"We still believe in the Philippine economy. Sooner or later it will bounce back."

SM Prime shares were up 10 centavos at P5.40 yesterday. The Philippine main index was down 0.39 percent or 3.87 points at 995.92 points.

"The news helped SM Prime to go up yesterday morning. But I think the timing (of the project) may not be right," said AB Capital stock analyst Jose Vistan.

He said SM Prime's resilience in tough economic times was partly due to a consumer shift to purchases of basic goods, which SM sells. A high-end project at this time of depressed demand may not go down well, Vistan said.

"But they may be projecting a recovery of the economy some time soon, that's why they are confident," he added.

Sio said SM and Keppel, one of Singapore's largest property developers, would each hold a 50-percent stake in the project.

Sio did not say how much revenue the joint venture was expected to generate or how much the project would cost.

The Podium, which began construction last year, would have a gross floor area of 27,974 sq. m. and would have a six-basement parking area.

SM currently operates the country's largest mall, called the SM Megamall with a floor area of 331,657 square meters, also in the Ortigas district.

Sio also said SM Prime's 2001 net profit might rise 10 to 12 percent over last year given strong consumer expenditure despite the weak economy.

He said the firm's net income for 2001 would be in the range of P3.4-3.5 billion ($65.8-67.7 million).

"We said it will increase 10-12 percent over last year.

This year, it will be about P3.4 billion to P3.5 billion," he said. *Reuters*

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Camp John Hay	350,000	-
Capitol Hills Golf & CC	130,000	-
Calatagan Golf	-	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	260,000	190,000
Canlubang	800,000	-
Celebrity Sports	200,000	-
Eagleridge "A"	Pls. Call	330,000
Eastridge	220,000	-
Evercrest Golf	110,000	-
Fontana "D/C"	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Forest Hills "C"	Pls. Call	-
Manila Polo	2,800,000	2,600,000
Makati Sports Club	-	300,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	720,000	600,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	750,000	-
Mt. Malarayat	-	350,000
Orchard	240,000	190,000
Phil. Columbian	90,000	60,000
Puerto Azul	170,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	240,000	200,000
Riviera Golf	200,000	-
Rockwell	475,000	-
Royale Tagaytay	100,000	Pls. Call
Sherwoods	100,000	-
Subic Bay Yatch Club	-	170,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	700,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	690,000	600,000
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3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	700,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	100,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	320,000	250,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	700,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	125,000	115,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	210,000	190,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	380,000	
10. CLUB FILIPINO	250,000	200,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	220,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	375,000	340,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	230,000	210,000
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	280,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	
17. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"		280,000
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	400,000	
*19. MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	15,000,000	
*20. MANILA POLO CLUB	3,000,000	2,700,000
21. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	700,000	
22. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	750,000	
23. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	140,000	
24. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25. MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
26. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	250,000	200,000
27. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	400,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	550,000	350,000
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	190,000
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	350,000	
*32. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,800,000	1,600,000
33. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	300,000	
34. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB	800,000	760,000
35. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	750,000	
36. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	180,000	
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Review to a kill

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THE GERMAN Embassy in Manila has only one thing to say about the German investment in the Naia Terminal 3. And that is, it's not good!

Officially, I'm sure, the embassy will deny it. No diplomats in their right minds will dare say anything derogatory about the project in their host country, which only happens to enjoy . . . well, a most favored status.

Obviously, the project gets favors from this cute administration, courtesy of Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, a.k.a. Bebot.

Top officials in the German Embassy here, nevertheless, are saying privately that the project is probably the worst investment that any German company has ever made in the Philippines, and the Germans have made a lot.

As you know, the German firm Fraport is building the terminal as a partner of Piatco, which is the controversial Philippine International Air Terminal Co.

Earlier, for instance, Fraport complained about the over billing by a certain company for some lousy jobs at the construction site. A major stockholder of the company was not Bebot himself. It was only his wife.

* * *

MAYBE officials of the German Embassy here could smell dirty politics in the project. In Congress, there are already four resolutions calling for a review of the Piatco contract. Sooner or later, the contract is bound to unravel.

Now I really don't know how the Senate can tackle such an important contract. It already suffers from a glut of investigation.

Still, Sen. Edgardo Angara filed a resolution calling for the review. Angara is considered in the business community as a levelheaded man. His only misgiving is, he once served in the Cabinet of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band.

But in the House of Representatives, the committee on good government of Rep. Ruy Elias Lopez is conducting hearings on the Piatco contract.

The hearings are progressing, mainly because three congressmen filed separate resolutions asking for the review. They were Reps. Sherwin Gatchalian, Raul Gonzales and Eduardo Veloso.

Finally, Gloriaetta herself announced a review of the contract, when she graced the renaming of the Clark airport as Diosdado Macapagal International Airport or DMIA.

If that sounds familiar, it's because that's the name of Gloriaetta's father, the "poor man from Lubao," who hailed from Pampanga. It's one of only three provinces which delivered the "13-0" outcome promised to her senatorial ticket last May.

With such a show of support for Gloriaetta, her *kabalen* thus were emboldened to ask her to develop Clark as the country's premier airport. But Piatco stands in the way.

* * *

UNDER the Piatco contract, the *kabalen* cannot realize their dream for DMIA, if Piatco does a lousy job in Terminal 3. I am not kidding. It's in the contract.

You see, the contract obligates the government to keep DMIA under wraps. The government cannot develop DMIA, unless Piatco's Terminal 3 hits a volume of a million passengers a year for three straight years.

In other countries, such a contract already falls under the category of unfair competition in the antitrust law. The contract can be killed, not just go through a review.

Here, this cute administration thinks it's . . . well, cute. The review of the Piatco contract, which Gloriaetta promised, remains precisely that—a promise! As for Bebot, well, he insists that the government can no longer touch the Piatco contract.

For what reason, pray tell, good sir! Bebot says that the government, once it awards a contract, cannot change it. Well and good! Bravo!

But how come, the very same department of Bebot wants to change the contract for the MRT-Edsa extension project? And all along, everybody thought that Bebot was really just fighting for his principle. A contract is a contract, my foot!

* * *

THREE weeks ago, actually, the *kabalen* of Gloriaetta staged a people's summit in Clark to ask for a mere review of the Piatco contract.

In particular, they were asking for an amendment of the provisions in the Piatco contract, which makes the DMIA a second class airport. In effect, the provisions make the *kabalen* second class citizens. For why is Piatco worthier than they?

But thanks to Gloriaetta's promise of a review, nothing happened, as usual. Thus an organized group of five hundred or so *kabalen* recently filed a court case.

It's actually a class suit, filed before the Angeles City Regional Trial Court. The civil case for "annulment of contract and damages" was filed against Piatco, Bebot, and Naia general manager Edgar Manda.

In effect, they are saying that, sure, the Naia Terminal 3 can go ahead, but it cannot go ahead at the expense of DMIA. Plus all those laws the contract violated!

Thus, they are asking the court for an outright annulment of the provisions in the Piatco contract which pertain to the DMIA. They also sought P2 million in damages, plus about half a million pesos for attorney's fee.

Methinks those are just loose change to Piatco and its supporters in this cute administration. They already made a lot of money.

Even before the Naia Terminal 3 can open for business, somebody already unloaded shares in a certain corporation, which has a job contract with Piatco. The initial investment was only P50,000. The holdings were sold for P20 million. Not bad!

MANGO, COCONUT EXPORTS

RP, Taiwan resolve dispute

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES and Taiwan have finally resolved their long-standing dispute on the quarantine restrictions imposed by Taipei on exports of Philippine mangoes and young coconuts.

In a bilateral meeting with Taiwanese officials in Qatar on Nov. 10, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II and Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor agreed to a proposal for Taiwan to send a team of phytosanitary experts to Manila on Nov. 18. The visit is aimed at paving the way for the lifting of the ban on mangoes and young coconuts within months.

The Taiwanese experts will verify farms that have been declared as pest-free zones in the country by other Philippine fruit importers such as the US. For areas where no pest-free certification could be made, Taiwan was considering to provide technical assistance to boost production of methods of these farmers to the phytosanitary standards of Taiwan.

The Philippines earlier urged Taiwan to lift its ban based on the US move to lift similar restrictions on Philippine mangoes and young coconuts, and export data showing that Philippine fruits have increasingly been shipped to other countries without any hitches. The US had previously banned the import of Philippine mangoes and young coconuts because they were suspected of carrying diseases notably the weevils for mangoes and cadang-cadang for coconuts.

But Taiwan claimed that these were "inconclusive," considering that the US and other markets might not be in the same position as Taiwan which wanted to protect its domestic production from diseases.

The Philippines had earlier offered to give concessions in fishery and investment rules to Taiwan in exchange for greater access of Philippine agriculture products to Taiwan. Roxas said the Philippines was eager to conclude a double taxation agreement with Taiwan; adopt a more simplified and streamlined process in the grant of visas to Taiwanese businessmen and tourists; approve the Manila-Taipei ATA Carnet Protocol; and craft a mutually beneficial cooperation agreement on the sea lane for fishing vessels.

Ayala to open part . . .

(From page B1)

occupied by February next year, although some stores were ready to open in time for the center's soft opening by December. He said ALI has secured locators for 90 percent of Metropoint's leasable space to date.

"It will target a broader market, including Metro Manila commuters," she said.

She said among Metropoint's locators would be top fast-food outlets and retail brands such as Bench, Giordano and Mendrez.

On the other hand, she said the first phase of Greenbelt redevelopment would be a new fine dining center located on the second floor of a newly converted car park building.

She said construction of the area, which would host 16 new fine dining restaurants, was ongoing and that some would likely be ready to start operating by December.

"The urban retail and entertainment center will be launched by June next year," she said. "It's not a very large development but we're proud of it. The redevelopment will include a park which includes a Japanese garden and a tropical garden which will also benefit the public."

Analysts said the first of three buildings under Greenbelt's redevelopment would lease about 3,300 square meters to restaurants.

ALI's rental business accounts for 25 percent of its total consolidated revenue, with the bulk derived from commercial center operations.

ALI chalked up a net profit of P1.55 billion for the first nine months of the year, almost flat from the level posted last year. Revenue expanded by 19 percent to P9.4 billion, mainly from land sales and rental income. Occupancy rate was still high at 94 percent while same-store sales at its commercial centers were higher by 6 percent.

The property arm of the Ayala conglomerate is also all-set for the groundbreaking of the 150,000-square-meter Market! Market! along the C-5 highway adjacent to the Fort Bonifacio Global City. The first phase of the new shopping center is expected to start operations by 2004.

Traders do odd . . .

(From page B1)

staffed by people leafing through fashion magazines. A game of computerized Scrabble has been making the rounds, and several brokers were brushing up on the game before the market opened.

The opening bell rang while a group of traders hovered in one corner of the trading floor, discussing their lunch plans. None of them sat down.

"The bell used to ring like bang-bang-bang," said Thomas Dee, who said he has been trading stocks for seven years.

"See? The ticker should be moving. Nothing. No phones ringing either," he said, happy to continue chatting as trade began.

Dee said when things get slow during the two-and-a-half hours of daily trade, the brokers will bet on lottery numbers.

"But still, stocks are better than gambling," he said. "Where else can you make P300,000 to P400,000 doing day trades? Of course you can lose that much as well."

Dee said he's hooked, even though the days of the big trades are over and he spends his afternoons at the movies.

Some of the younger traders, however, are out working on a backup plan.

Alvin Ang, 25, who began trading stocks just before the Asian financial crisis of 1997, says he now makes more money teaching swimming lessons in the afternoon than he does from playing the market in the morning.

During the evenings, he studies for an MBA degree and sells vintage toys on e-Bay.

"My end goal is to have my own business . . . maybe something in food. My friends are in manufacturing. The economy's down right now, but those guys are still doing OK."

Some brokers say they plan to stick it out.

"I could stay home but I'd rather pass my day with friends. Our lunches are very lively," said Dee, as a fellow broker leaned across the top of a booth to settle a bet on a numbers game.

"We call it *'matira matibay'* in Tagalog: Whoever lasts is the strongest," Dee said, referring to the Philippine language.

"I just don't seem to get tired of losing." *Reuters*

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* *as of November 06, 2001*

NTC coaxes Smart, Globe to provide free voice calls

By Abigail L. Ho

MOBILE phone subscribers may be in for a Christmas treat.

Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. are currently in talks with the National Telecommunications Commission to work out a deal that will give users of cellular phones free voice calls before the year closes.

In an interview yesterday, NTC chief Eliseo Rio Jr. said the NTC was meeting with Smart and Globe, the two biggest mobile phone companies in the country, and their subsidiaries to present proposals that could serve as "replacements" for the free text messages that were earlier taken away from Smart's and Globe's subscribers.

"Those free text (messages) that they removed could be translated into equivalent free voice minutes. For example, 100 free text messages could be converted into 10 minutes of free calls," Rio told reporters.

Rio said Smart and Globe expressed reservations over giving free voice calls as this would eat into their income, but the two companies recognized that they could earn more from it as they would be able to use voice channels to ease the heavy traffic of text messages passing through their systems everyday.

"Their voice system is 40-percent underutilized. This still has plenty of room while they're trying to squeeze all the text traffic into one channel," he said.

Most mobile phone companies are using only a single channel to accommodate text messages, while at least seven channels are devoted to voice calls.

Rio said the NTC's proposals would allow cellular phone operators to turn their idle assets into revenue-generating assets.

He stressed, however, that mobile phone subscribers would gain more from a memorandum changing the billing schemes of cellular phone companies to a per-6-second pulse rate from the existing per-minute arrangement.

"We're consulting with our legal department on what we can implement without being cited for contempt. Since the Court of Appeals has already lifted the temporary restraining order on the (memorandum circular), that means we can already implement it," he said.

With the per 6-second pulse rate, 100 free text messages are equivalent to more than 10 minutes of free voice calls.

Rio said Smart and Globe were "concerned about the set-up time or the ringing time."

"Telecommunication companies want to bill even for the ringing time because this already entails the use of their systems," he said.

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Tighter rules on money changers seen

By Clarissa S. Batino

IN an effort to check the unregulated flow of foreign currencies in the Philippines, the Macapagal administration is evaluating a proposal to require persons leaving the country to declare cash that they are carrying in excess of $10,000.

The government is also planning to require loosely regulated money-changers to register and report their transactions to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas starting next year.

These moves were set in motion to curb a noticeable increase in foreign currencies leaving the country.

Monetary authorities have blamed this anomaly on lax government policies on over 1,000 money-changers operating in the country.

The Anti-Money Laundering Council is consolidating the new policies. BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura heads the council. Its members include the heads of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Insurance Commission.

A central bank official said these plans were still being discussed at the level of the policy-making Monetary Board of the BSP.

People leaving the country are currently required to limit the local currency they are bringing to P10,000. Those arriving to the country are also required to declare any substantial amount of foreign currencies with them.

An attempt to smuggle some $20 million out of the country last month through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport forced government agencies to look closer into their policies on outgoing currencies.

"We are determining whether the BSP would have to require money changers to register and to start reporting to the central bank. If ever, the policy could be implemented starting January 2002," a ranking central bank official said.

Requiring money-changers to register with the BSP will entail a regulatory framework on capital requirements, submission of financial statement and other reporting guidelines.

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force, which is currently reviewing an anti-money laundering law the Philippines passed last month, has laid out as one of its requirement a policy to monitor the buying and selling of foreign currencies through money changers.

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BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	700,000	750,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	-	100,000/105,000*
CAMP JOHN HAY	-	300,000
CANLUBANG	-	750,000
CAPITOL HILLS	115,000	130,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	-	200,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	350,000/620,000**	375,000/450,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST A/B*	-	100,000/150,000*
FONTANA D/C*/B**	120,000*	90,000/150,000*/280,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	210,000	230,000/350,000*/450,000**
LUISITA GOLF CLUB	500,000	Pls. call or swap
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	-	300,000/400,000*
MANILA GOLF CLUB CORP.	-	14M
MANILA POLO CLUB	2,575,000	2,800,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	-	700,000/800,000*
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	150,000/160,000*
MIMOSA IND./CORP.*	-	240,000/375,000*
MT. MALARAYAT A/C* (w/lot)**/B***	350,000***	400,000/450,000*/2.0 M**
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	200,000/400,000**	2,150,000/425,000*
PUERTO AZUL A/B*	140,000	150,000/Pls. call*
RIVIERA A/B*	-	200,000/400,000*
ROCKWELL CLUB	-	500,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*/C**	100,000	110,000/150,000*/180,000**
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**	-	230,000/350,000*/450,000**
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A	-	1,650,000
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP.*	-	300,000/450,000*
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	-	350,000/550,000*
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS CC/GOLF*	-	375,000/750,000*
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	-	650,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	170,000	185,000
WACK WACK	-	6.8 M

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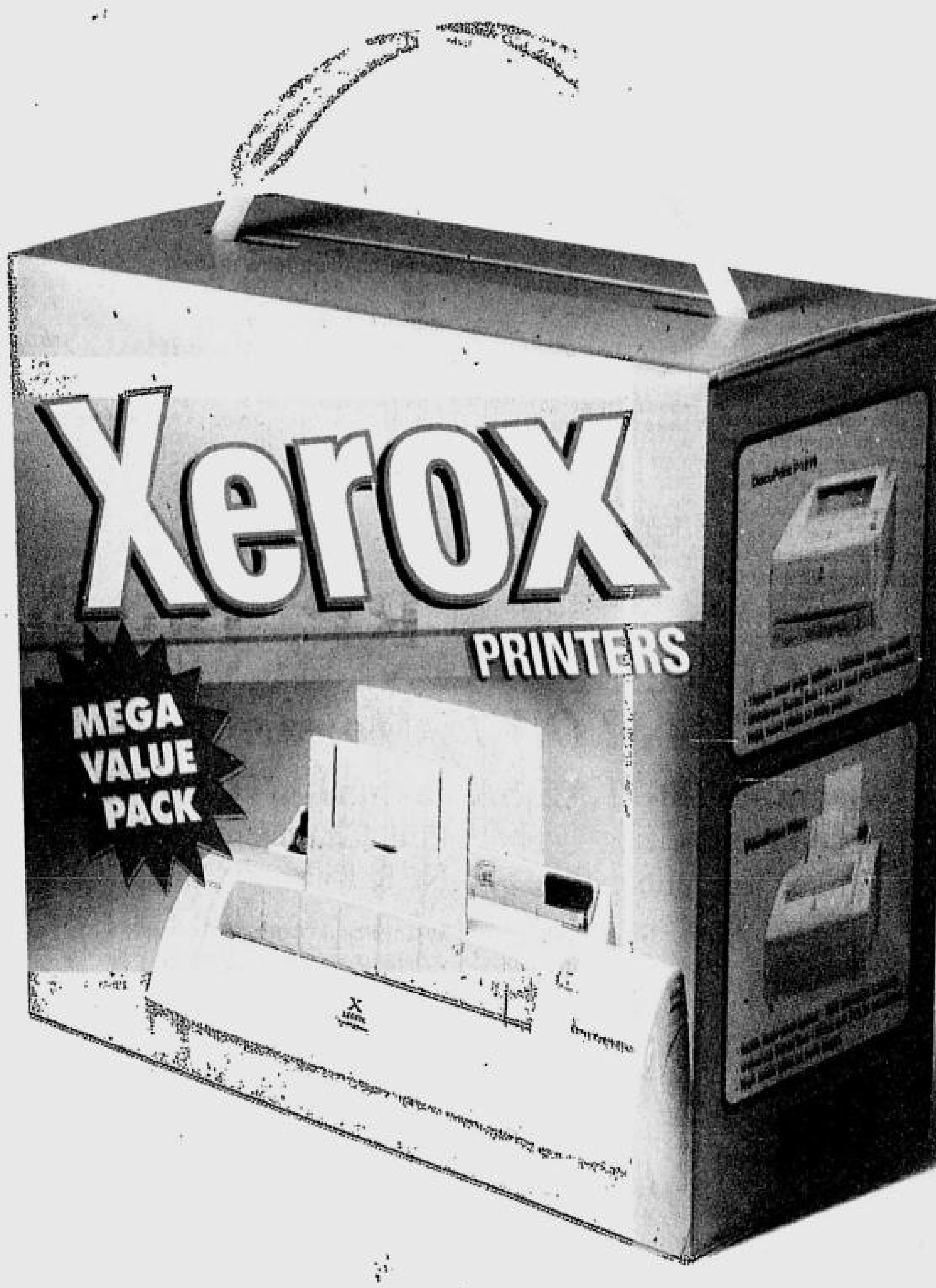

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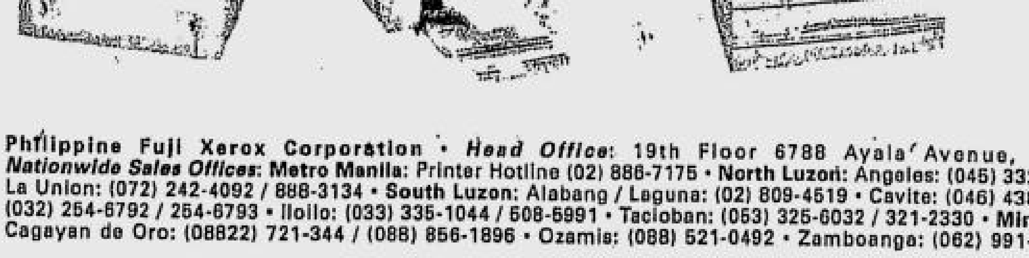
• PCL6 and PCL5e emulation
• High toner yield of 5000 pages

WorkCentre 385
• Print/Scan/Fax/Copy in one
• 8ppm laser print speed
• 600 x 600dpi print resolution
• Universal Series Bus
• High toner yield of 5000 pages

WorkCentre XD155df
• Digital copier and laser printer in one
• 8ppm laser print speed
• 600 x 600dpi print resolution
• Automatic 2-side copying
• With Toner Saver Mode



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ABS-CBN posts 29% profit drop

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., the broadcast arm of the Lopez family, posted a 29-percent drop in net income to P435.52 million in the third quarter of this year from P614 million recorded during the same period last year.

Documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission showed ABS-CBN's third-quarter profit fell as a result of a 16-percent increase in operating expenses to P2.08 billion and a fivefold increase in interest expenses to P121.2 million.

The broadcast firm's net revenue grew 5 percent to P2.86 billion during the third quarter but this was insufficient to cover for the large jump in expenses during the period.

For the first nine months of the year, ABS-CBN's profit declined 19 percent to P1.39 billion against the comparative level of P1.647 billion registered last year.

Consolidated net revenue went up 15 percent to P8.01 billion during the nine-month period from last year's comparative figure of P6.975 billion on the back of higher earnings from ABS-CBN International and Studio 23 Inc. and the sustained healthy performance of Channel 2.

The rise in revenue, however, was overcome by a 23-percent increase in operating expenses to fund the expansion of subsidiaries.

"A large part of the expansion in subsidiary-related costs was due to ABS-CBN International as well as the consolidation of Studio 23, which impacted particularly on the first semester of 2001, and ABS-CBN Interactive, which was in pre-operating stage prior to this year," ABS-CBN noted.

ABS-CBN International, which services overseas markets, continued to grow its customer base, reaching 126,815 cable and direct-to-home subscribers in North America, Middle East and Asia Pacific by the end of the three quarters of 2001 or 209 percent from the end of last year.

Meanwhile, Channel 2 still led its competitors with a 45-percent average audience share and ratings of 19 percent more than all of free-to-air competitors combined.

SPI Tech signs deal with scientists' group

By Doris C. Dumlao

LEADING information technology service firm SPI Technologies Inc. has bagged a new outsourcing deal with the American Geophysical Union, an international organization of geophysicists.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SPI president Ernest Cu and CFO Francisco Suarez said the new contract would enhance the company's revenue stream by more than P30 million a year.

The agreement involves the electronic production of content for AGU's scientific journal program. Over the past year, SPI said it had collaborated with the American group on developing an innovative article-based publication model.

The deal is expected to accelerate the delivery of content to the global research community involving the use of SPI's production tools in multiple and reusable formats like XML, PDF and HTML.

"This award signifies the strength of our diversification strategy for Scholarly Publisher Services (SPS). Starting with small volumes and later progressing into large volume business has been the trend for our model," Cu said.

"The long-term partnership with a prestigious scientific community such as AGU validates the capability we have established. We expect this new business to be a key factor in SPS' growth going forward," he noted.

The company's SPS unit provides end-to-end production services for scientific journals enabling multi-channel publishing.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Monday, November 12, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	43.5	43.5	327,000
China Banking Corp.	500	500	500	500	270
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	17.25	17.25	16.75	16.75	170,000
First E-Bank Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	160	163	160	160	182,880
Philippine National Bank	47.5	48	47	48	530,100
Phil. Savings Bank	20.5	20	20.5	20	3,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	200,000
Filipino Fund Inc	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1320	1325	1320	1325	3,840
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1080	1086	1080	1080	840
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24	24	24	24	100
Globe Telecom Inc.	575	575	560	570	54,050
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	500,000
Piltel	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	50,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	362.5	362.5	360	360	133,540
Ivantage Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	10,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	18,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	21	21	21	21	8,300
Manila Electric Co. B	29.5	29.5	27	27	1,679,400
Petron Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	4,221,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.32	1,077,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	2,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	23	23.5	23	23.5	15,600
San Miguel Corp. A	40	40.5	40	40.5	38,300
San Miguel Corp. B	50.5	51	50.5	50.5	345,800
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	90,000
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.3	1,511,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	292,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.48	0.52	0.48	0.52	160,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	150,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.11	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	701,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.47	0.47	3,280,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	900,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22	22	22	22	89,400
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.58	70,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	140,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	60,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.8	0.81	0.8	0.81	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	9.6	9.8	9.6	9.8	90,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	800,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	25	25.5	24.5	24.5	183,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.001	0.001	0.0008	0.0008	156,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.0042	20,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.45	2,037,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	830,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.19	1,550,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.16	6,010,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.3	10,162,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	30,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1	1	1	1	3,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.016	0.018	0.016	0.017	11,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	4,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	300,000
Interport Res.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0026	0.0024	0.0026	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	1,500,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,460,030	70,080,470.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	213,654,290	175,999,035.00
PRO	21,469,000	71,426,500.00
Mining	17,763,000	285,500.00
OIL	6,840,000	42,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	261,186,920	325,814,405.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	391.39	DOWN 0.14
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,406.46	DOWN 13.80
PRO	430.26	DOWN 0.15
Mining	937.71	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.17	UP 0.01
All Shares Index	654.41	DOWN 3.66
Composite	993.23	DOWN 6.56

NO. OF ADVANCES: 8; NO. OF DECLINES: 33; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 40; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 81; NO. OF TRADES: 1,310

DISCLOSURES

IMPERIAL Resources Inc. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Nov. 22, 10 a.m. at the 2nd Floor West Room of Manila Golf and Country Club in Makati City. Stockholders as of Sept. 14 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. Included in the agenda is the proposed increase in its authorized capital stock from P4 billion to P10 billion.

* * *

CENTRO Escolar University bought 5,000 of its shares at P8 per share.

* * *

GUOCO Holdings Inc. changed its corporate name to **Prime Orion Philippines Inc.**

* * *

AYALA Corp. disclosed that its consolidated net income for the first nine months of the year reached P2.52 billion, down from last year's net income of P2.85 billion for the same period.

* * *

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. announced that it moved its principal office from PDCP Bank Center in Makati City to Hatchasia Globalcity Center in Taguig.

* * *

IPEOPLE Inc. announced the resignation of the following: Alfonso Yuchengco III, director and chair; Reynaldo Evidente, director, president and CEO; Rizalino Navarro, director; Joseph Dolina, SVP; and Ma. Indira Ann Luchangco, AVP. Elected were Basil Ong as chair and Perry Uy as director. Also appointed were Clarito Illustre as officer-in-charge and Jose Ma. Castillo III as acting chief financial officer.

* * *

CENTRAL Azucarera Don Pedro bought 250,000 of its shares at P0.80 per share.

* * *

GLOBE Telecom announced that its wireless subscriber base has exceeded 4 million and that its revenues for the first nine months of the year reached P24.8 billion.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

PHILIPPINE TOURISM INVESTMENT & OPPORTUNITIES 2001
" TOURISM M.O.V.E.s Toward Economic Progress"
November 20-21, EDSA Shangri-la Hotel, Mandaluyong City

Organized by: University of Asia and the Pacific Center for Research & Communication • Phil. Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Membership Services Division) • NCR Tourism Council • Seamless eTravel Inc.

Day 1, November 20 (Tuesday)
Registration starts st 8:00 a.m.
Welcome Remarks
Morning Sessions:

- **Tourism Investment & Opportunities in the Philippines**
  Hon. Evelyn T. Pantig, Undersecretary, Department of Tourism
- **Community Tourism and Its Role in Poverty Alleviation**
  Dr. Bernardo M. Villegas, Dean, School of Economics, Universiy of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P)
- **Tourism: Spain's No.1**
  Coping with the Challenges of Development
  Mr. Miguel Nieto Sandoval San Segundo, Tourism Councellor, Embassy of Spain (Singapore)
- **Why Invest in the Philippines Now**
  Mr. John Cogul, Vice President and CEO for Asia Pacific, Barcelo Group

Afternoon Sessions: Workshops and Industry Briefing

- **Understanding Sustainable Ecotourism**
  Mr. Carlos Libosada (UP-Asian Institute of Tourism)
  Mr. Alberto K. Lim (Ten Knots Developing Corporation)
  Mr. Luis Cuervo (Property Partnership Inc.)
- **Expanding into Agritourism**
  Director Elizabeth Nelle (Department of Tourism)
  Dr. Francis Santamaria (SASSOC Planners and Consultings)
  Mr. Zach Sarian (Manila Bulletin)
- **Planning and Packaging Tourism Projects**
  Arch. Felino Palafox Jr. (Palafox and Associates)
- **Developing Tourism Projects: Private Initiatives**
  Mr. Paul Chaston (EC Harris Phils.)
  Dr. Geronimo Manahan (PROS)
- **Developing and Managing Accommodations**
  Mr. Jose Mari del Rosario (Microtel Inns and Suites)
  Professor Vicente R. Valdellon Jr. (Property Barometer Inc.)
- **Funding and Financing Projects**
  Mr. Guido Alfredo A. Delgado (GAA & Associates)
  Ms. Eufemia Mendoza (Development Bank of the Philippines)
  *Ms. Nancy Veran (Land Bank of the Philippines) **
- **Heritage, Arts and Culture**
  Dr. Jaime C. Laya (NCCA)
  Arch. Javier Galvan (Instituto Cervantes)
  Dr. Mayu T. Munarriz (Asiane Value and Appraisers)
  Ursula Aznar (Shambala Center & Tribal Museum)
- **Tourism Development: Issues and Concerns**
  Atty. Victoria Jasmin (Department of Tourism)
  Ms. Tracy Bautista (PIATCO)
  Ms. Concepcion Santos (Philtranco Holidays)

Day 2, November 21 (Wednesday)
Registration starts at 8:00 a.m.
Welcome Remarks
Morning Sessions

- **Coping with Ups and Downs of Tourism**
  Mr. David Stone, CEO, Maya-Maya Resorts and Maya-Maya Yacht Club
- **Implementing Regional Tourism Plans**
  Hon. Hermilando I. Mandanas, Governor, Province of Batangas, Chairman, Regional Development Council
- **Architecture and Tourism**
  Arch. Francisco Mañosa, Managing Partner, Francisco Manosa & Associates
- **The Role of S & E's in Tourism Development**
  Hon. Mina T. Gabor, President PHILSMED*

Afternoon Sessions: Workshop and Industry Briefing

- **Health Vacation**
  Mr. Ricky Gutierrez (VAMED)
  Dr. Ricardo Quintos (UP-PGH)
- **Sustainable Community Tourism Projects**
  Ms. Monina Flores (ECOVENTURES)
- **Industry Trends and Prospects**
  Dr. Roberto E. De Vera (UA&P)
  Professor Ramon M. Quesada (UA&P)
- **Funding and Financing Projects**
  Mr. Luis Monserrat (Property Partnership Inc. & Hospitality International Inc.)
- **Technology, Internet and E-commerce**
  Mr. Eduardo Nuque (Kalakbayan Travel Systems)
  Mr. John Anthony Pery (Viaje Philippines)
  Mr. Rudy Rullan (Seamless eTravel)
  Ms. Tess Frogozo (DOT VIS)

Day 3 Optional Tours for Interested Participants

• M.O.V.E. (Matching, Opportunities, Ventures and Exchanges) Session

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Gov't keeps FCDU tax at 7.5%

By Clarissa S. Batino

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday said the government would keep the tax rate on the interest earnings of dollar deposits at 7.5 percent, rejecting an earlier proposal to raise the rate to at least 10 percent.

"The position of the DOF (Department of Finance) is to keep the tax on FCDU deposits at 7.5 percent. I am not inclined to change it," said the finance secretary.

The DOF technical working group has recommended to the Macapagal economic team an increase in the tax rate on FCDU deposits to at least 10 percent, a proposal considered modest compared with that of the International Monetary Fund to raise it to as much as 20 percent.

The Fund wanted the government to impose a uniform tax rate on the interest earnings of dollar and peso deposits.

"It is not the right time to create factors that may rock an already fragile situation," said Camacho.

Camacho's position, however, was criticized by some finance officials who said that the secretary seemed willing to sacrifice revenue just to preserve banks' earnings.

Aligning the tax on FCDU deposits' interest earnings with that on peso deposits formed part of the medium-term policy recommended by the government's economic team.

Sources said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has given its go-ahead to the proposal as it found the rate more acceptable than the earlier plan to double the tax rate to 15 percent.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the doubling of the tax rate might lead to capital flight.

Prior to Camacho's appointment to the DOF, the department had pushed for the doubling of the tax on FCDU deposits to raise for the government P4 billion in additional revenue.

"If we impose higher taxes, we may lose the dollar deposits because money will go to where better returns can be achieved," said Buenaventura in an earlier interview.

The central bank chief pointed out that the $12 billion in FCDU deposits served as secondary reserves that had helped the country weather the 1997 Asian crisis.

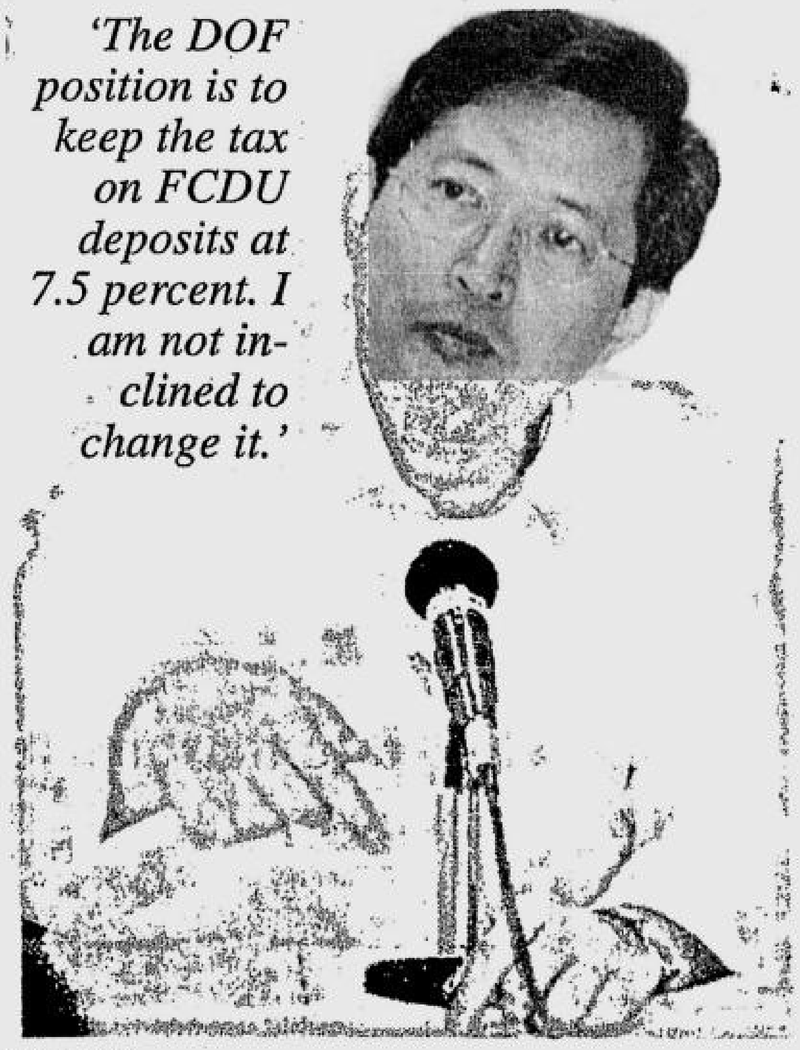
The Bankers Association of the Philippines had also objected to the doubling of the tax rate, recognizing the FCDU deposits' importance as secondary reserves. The country's gross international reserves stood at $14.5 billion as of September.

A DOF official explained that the incentives given to FCDU depositors were unnecessary at a time when the government was in dire need for additional revenue.

Another DOF official, however, noted that keeping the tax on dollar deposits at a level lower than that on peso deposits could help the country cope with a rising external account problem.

The central bank has projected that the balance-of-payments deficit this year could even exceed $2 billion. It said the level might go higher if the country's export performance in the coming months would continue to falter.

> *'The DOF position is to keep the tax on FCDU deposits at 7.5 percent. I am not inclined to change it.'*



CAMACHO

RP hits moves to railroad trade, investment reforms

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES is urging other developing countries to strongly resist moves by the United States, Europe and other developed nations to railroad reforms in trade and investment and competition policies that are expected to benefit only rich countries.

The country is also asking its neighbors in Asia to push for the abolition of all export subsidies on agriculture products that put poor countries at a disadvantage.

In a statement from the WTO meeting in Doha, Qatar, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II said: "We need to steadfastly fight for the right of developing countries to determine their investment and trade, and competition policies, and not succumb to impositions by the rich states."

Roxas said discussions on the Doha Ministerial Declaration were gridlocked on Europe's insistence to tie up trade deals with the region's stringent environmental parameters.

Another contentious issue in the discussions is the lobbying by developed countries—particularly Japan, Korea and Europe—for investment policy reforms that will in effect give them national treatment in developing countries. Roxas said he and other trade ministers of Third World countries were particularly concerned about the ploy of the rich countries to initiate these one-sided reforms.

Roxas also chided developed countries, particularly the United States, for their double standard in the implementation of trade-related intellectual property (TRIP) agreement specifically in the software and pharmaceutical industries.

Roxas said WTO members should have "utmost flexibility to adopt public health measures not only during epidemics but even in ordinary times when ordinary medicines are equally unaffordable for developing countries' marginalized population."

Roxas has initiated the parallel importation of cheap drugs from India to lower the cost of medicine in the country but strong opposition by multinational corporations stymied his efforts.

Aside from drugs, Roxas scored the United States for being more stringent in the implementation of its anti-piracy rules for software in developing countries compared to developed countries that were equally culpable of these transgressions.

In his speech, Roxas joined other developing countries in bewailing the wide gap between the promise and the reality in the implementation of agreements made during the Uruguay round in 1994.

Instead of increasing the share of world export trade through the opening of market access to developed countries, Roxas said liberalization has resulted to "stagnant growth marked by access to products of marginal export interest to us (developing countries)."

Roxas said industries in developing countries did not become more efficient and competitive with the opening up of their markets; "they became dislocated and some businesses were forced to close down."

Asian rice producers seen to survive WTO

ASIAN rice growers watch warily as the world moves a step closer to free trade, but analysts said traditional markets may not be lost easily given rice's position as a "relationship commodity."

Poor prices, too much stock and competition in both domestic and international markets were already worries for exporters Thailand and Vietnam, and other growers such as Japan and South Korea, even before the world's biggest producer China entered the World Trade Organization (WTO) on Saturday.

China, with 1.3 billion people, is both awed and feared as a market and competitor, and Asian rice growers said at a conference in Malaysia last week that a WTO with Beijing posed more uncertainties in the trade of the world's No. 1 staple.

"The competitiveness of Thai rice products may be seriously challenged by the full accession of China into the WTO, which is likely to occur in the near future," Thai Trade Representative Prachuab Chaiyasan told the conference in Malaysia's northern Langkawi Island.

China's abundant raw materials and cheap, plentiful labor will put more pressure on Thailand's rice exports, already hit by a global glut and price undercutting, due partly to US farmers selling cheap because of government subsidies, Prachuab said.

But industry veterans said long-established markets would not be lost easily in a world where 4 billion of the 6.2 billion people ate rice.

"A rice buyer is very particular on origin, packing, marking and crop year details and, in most cases, is not ready to switch origins," said Rakesh Sodhia, managing director at Bangkok-based Phoenix Commodities Ltd.

"Hence, rice will remain a 'relationship commodity' and buyer-seller would continue to interact with each other in trading of rice for a much longer period than for other commodities," he told the Langkawi conference.

But exporters had to work harder to fight competition, said the trader of nearly 20 years.

"Buyers expect more than just simple transactions. They expect service: pre-sales and after-sales. And only those who can provide such service would survive," Sodhia said.

Milton Bazley, senior business manager at Australia's

Ricegrowers Cooperative Ltd., said value-added products such as rice chips and rice tortillas could help capture new markets in a world flooded with standard meal staple.

Reuters

PNOC units to rationalize operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE-OWNED Philippine National Oil Co. said it would rationalize the operations of its subsidiaries to avoid overlapping of activities.

PNOC president Thelmo Cunanan said rationalization was deemed necessary to enable all PNOC subsidiaries to focus on their respective fields of expertise.

"For instance, PNOC Exploration Corp. has a coal mining project when PNOC Coal Corp. should be taking care of that," Cunanan pointed out.

PNOC-Exploration has a coal mine in Isabela. A coal-fired power plant will be built near this mine.

"We must focus on and develop the exploration function of PNOC-Coal," Cunanan added. In this case, he said PNOC-Exploration's mine-mouth project would go to PNOC-Coal.

Industry sources said PNOC-Coal has been for a long time limited to coal trading activities while it should be playing a key role in the development of the local coal industry.

In a related matter, a coal expert from the Department of Energy has pushed for the development of integrated coal-mine-to-power projects, saying these would boost the local coal industry.

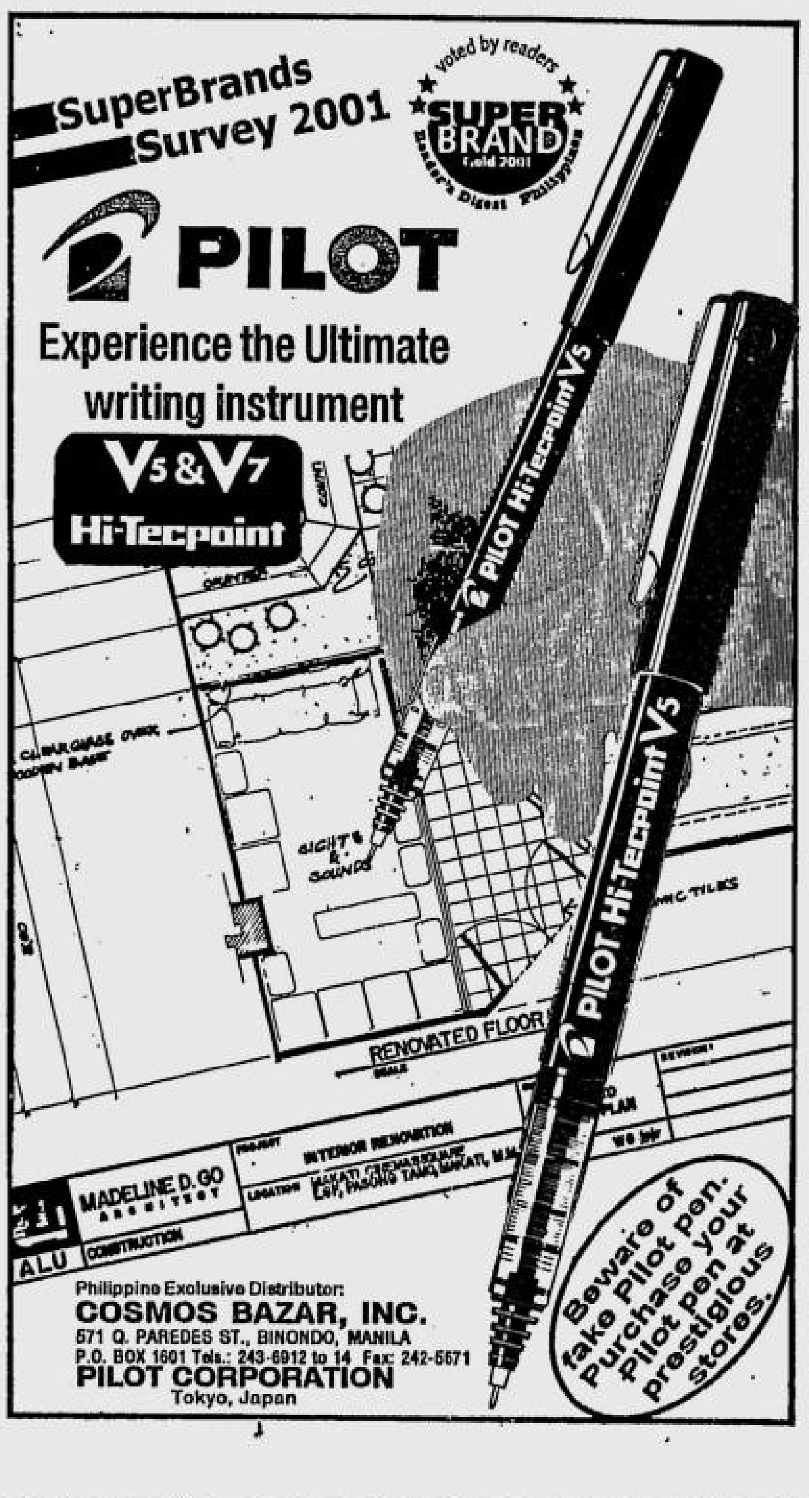
Domingo M. Casupang, chief research specialist of the DOE's coal and nuclear minerals division, said the scheme would use the country's vast low-rank coal resources that were still untapped.

"Integrated projects substantially reduce the transport costs for coal because power plants are built near the mines," Casupang said in a report dated June 2001.

The official said potential mine-mouth power plants could produce more than 3,500 megawatts of electricity.

Of these, more than 2,300 mw are located in Mindanao, which, however, is the least developed region in the country.

Casupang identified the areas as Zamboanga del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Bukidnon, Maguindanao, Sarangani, South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.



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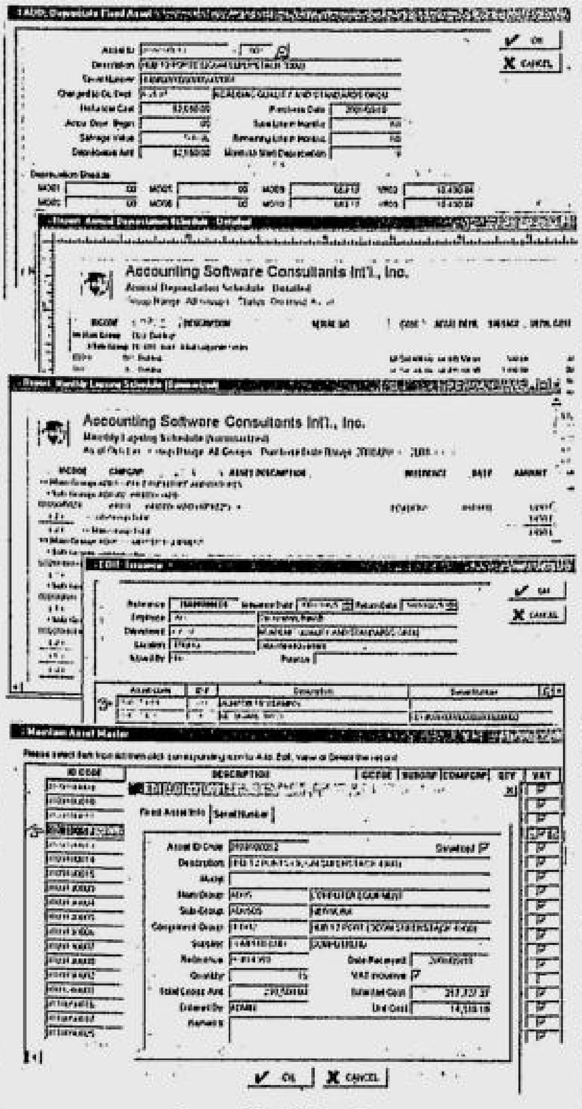

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- Asset Accountability (Employee/Department/Location)
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Victoria Court group gets ISO 9002-certified

VICTORIA Court Group has achieved another first.

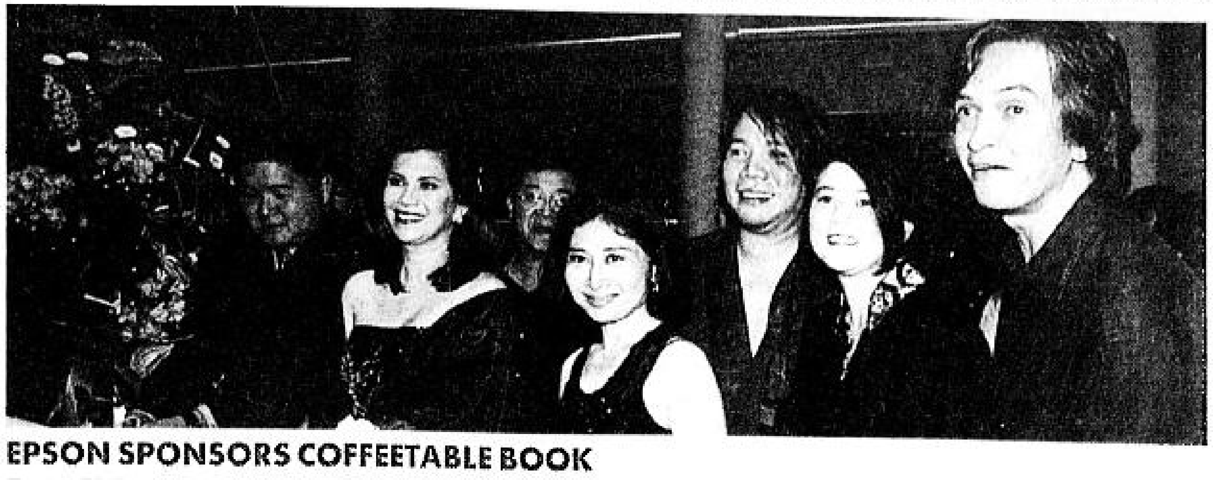
Acknowledged by many as the country's leading industry player and trend-setter in the lodging industry, the Victoria Court Group, consisting of the Victoria Court and Vinta Lodge chains, together with its hotel division, Best Western Hotel in La Corona, was recently ISO 9002-certified.

This was after a rigid screening, auditing and validating by TUV Product Service Asia Pacific, a German-based ISO accrediting and consulting group which had certified major local and multinational companies, including Sony Philippines, Unilever, Pilipinas Shell, National Power Corp., Epson, and PSI Technologies.

"Victoria Court is the first and only drive-in hotel group in the Philippines to get an ISO 9002 certification and what made it more difficult for them was that the matrix approach was adapted, meaning if any of the properties inspected fail to meet ISO standards, the whole group does not get certified," said Reyland Nepomuceno, local TUV business development head.

Victoria Court Group CEO Archie King's vision and passion for world-class quality has brought this lodging chain to its premier position. "Customer service, after all, is the lifeblood of our business," he stressed.

It was in October 1999 when the group officially launched its ISO certification project. Among others, Victoria Court pioneered the thematic suite rooms that could rival regular hotel de luxe rooms and the introduction of shower party packages inside its suite rooms.



EPSON SPONSORS COFFEETABLE BOOK

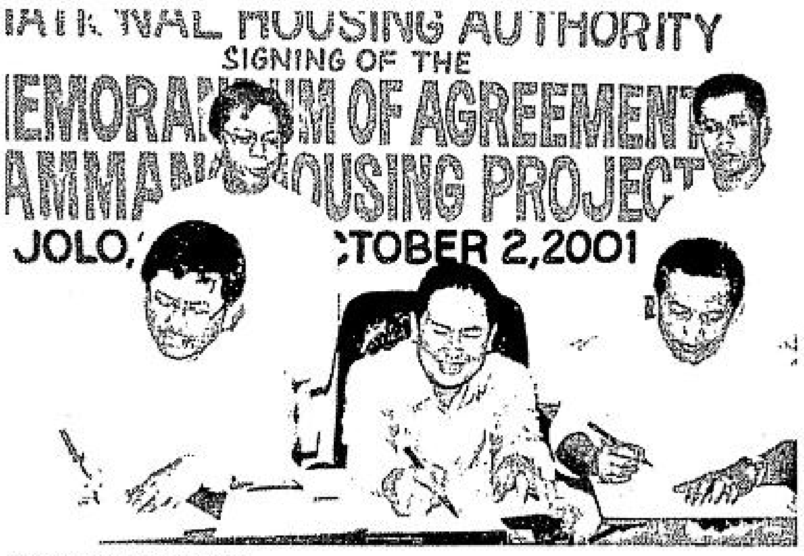
Epson Philippines Inc., the country's leader in digital imaging solutions, is a major sponsor of 'Images,' a hard-bound coffeetable book created by the teamup of photographer Jun de Leon and hair and makeup artist Patrick Rosas during the book launch and exhibit held recently at the RCBC Galleria and Bank Hall, Makati City. Epson Stylus PRO 9500, a large professional color inkjet printer incorporating 1440 dpi print head technology was used in printing the large photo printouts of prominent fashion and entertainment personalities in the book. These large printouts were then displayed at the exhibit. Shown cutting the ribbon to signal the formal opening of the book launch are, from left, Anton Huang, Gina de Venecia, Hilda Antonio, Patrick Rosas, Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Jun de Leon.

FOCUS: 17th AD CONGRESS

TARGET: MARKET

SAFI-HEINZ UFC AS SPONSOR

SAFI-HEINZ UFC has recently signed is as sponsor of the upcoming 17th Ad Congress at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug, Cebu. Shown signing the agreement are (seated, from left) overall chair Noy Dy-Liacco, SAFI-HEINZ UFC marketing director Shareena Roman-Manhit, vice chair Angelica Sulza and finance director Jun Alcantara. Standing (from left) are Pana executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, ways and means chair Gil Chua, SAFI HEINZ UFC assistant media and promo manager Vic Galzote and senior media and promo manager Catherine Ramos.



SULU HOUSING

Lawyer Edgardo Pamintuan (left), general manager of the National Housing Authority (NHA), Representative Munir Arbison (middle, of the 2nd District of Sulu) and former Representative lawyer Asani Tammang, sign a memorandum of agreement for the construction of additional housing units at the Kamahardikaan Village Project in Indanan, Sulu. Beneficiaries of the project include low-salaried government employees who are members of the GSIS and Pag-Ibig. The project also includes the development of a 35,000-gallon source of potable water for Phase II of Kamahardikaan Village project.

WLC IN-HOUSE TRAINING

World Link Couriers Inc. (WLC) recently conducted a franchisee in-house training. Present during the training were (sitting from left) Mila Rillo (WLC-Marikina); Marilou Ignacio (WLC-Marikina); Analyn Delgado (WLC-Timog); Noemi Atienza (WLC-Cavite); and Michelle Comia (WLC-Libis). Standing (from left) were Jonathan Ruby (country manager--WLC Roosevelt); Edward Atienza (WLC-Cavite); Noel Glinoga (WLC-Pagasa); Nilo Umlas (WLC-Marikina); Paterno Palomo (WLC-V. Luna); Angel Pancho (marketing manager-WLC Roosevelt).

RALLY SPONSOR

Shell Helix is the banner sponsor of the first 'Shell-Helix Motoring Today Corporate Motor Sports Challenge' on Nov. 30. The 'Sampaguita Rally' participants are composed of corporate executives and motoring enthusiasts. Shown during the signing ceremony is Raffy Capinpin (right), Asean marketing manager, consumer division, Pilipinas Shell, and Butch Gamboa, host and executive producer of long-running automotive TV show "Motoring Today."

Filipino elected to toastmaster international board

CHRISTINE Temblique of Meycauayan, Bulacan, Philippines, has been elected to the board of directors of Toastmasters International, a worldwide, non-profit organization teaching skills in public speaking and leadership. Toastmasters members elected her to the two-year volunteer term during the organization's recent 70th annual International Convention in Anaheim, California.

A dedicated Toastmaster for 10 years, Temblique has been the owner and treasurer of M.C. Display and Metalcraft Corp. for 26 years. Temblique is a member of the Inner Wheel Club of Meycauayan, Ateneo De Manila University and the Bulacan Chamber of Commerce, and she is the incoming president of the Soroptimist Club of Meycauayan and the Year Level chair for High School Parents. She was the Philippine Ladies Tennis League champion, an outstanding graduate at St. Mary's College, Outstanding Lady of Athlete of 1990 and past director of Soroptimist International of Meycauayan, and she received appreciation awards from Rotary International and the province of Bulacan.

Since its founding in 1924, Toastmasters International has helped 4 million men and women develop their communication and leadership skills. For more information on Toastmasters International and local clubs, call 1-800-9WE-SPEAK or visit www.toastmasters.org.

Keppel Phils plays part in supporting RP economy

IN THESE times of uncertainty, the Philippines has found an ally in Keppel Philippines Properties Inc. in its bid to strengthen the economy.

Ever since it started operations in the country a couple of years ago as a subsidiary of Keppel Land Limited of Singapore, KPP has infused into the country's coffers millions of pesos in the form of business investments and other contributions.

"Our presence in the Philippines is proof of our continued confidence in the government and economy, all it takes is a good boost" as stated by Lawrence Peh, country head of KPP in a recent interview.

In the housing sector, KPP is currently developing Palmdale Heights, its first middle-income residential condominium project in a joint venture with Phinma Property Holdings, Corp.

In the retail sector business, KPP tied up with SM ShoeMart to create the latest lifestyle-centered SMKL Retail Podium in Ortigas. It is due to open by the end of the year.

Inmate legal assistance

IN LINE with its mission of providing free legal service to those who deserve it, the Philippine Bar Association (PBA), under the leadership of lawyer Federico Agcaoili, recently embarked on a new project to reach out to the inmates of the New Bilibid Prison (NBP). Dubbed as "Tulong-Laya: A Legal Clinic for the Inmates of the New Bilibid Prison", the project was initiated by the chair of the PBA's legal aid committee, lawyer Roberto O. Parel, and his co-chair, lawyer Rita Linda V. Jimeno. Assisting them was the Philippine Jesuit Prison Service (PJPS), an organization of Jesuit and lay prison volunteer workers based inside the NBP and headed by its executive director, Fr. Earl Carmencio Barredo.

Tulong-Laya was participated in by 13 law firms from Metro Manila, as 28 volunteer-lawyers trooped to the maximum and medium security compound of the NBP at Muntinlupa City last September to give legal advice to 63 inmates. The ultimate goal of the project was to work for the release of overstaying inmates of the NBP as well as to assist those who need legal representation in the appeal of their cases.

SM Foundation launches donation drive for typhoon victims

SM Foundation, together with its project partner DZRH, has launched Operation Tulong Express, a donation drive for victims of typhoon *Nanang*, which has devastated the provinces of Iloilo and Camiguin Island.

Ongoing at four SM Supermalls – SM City North-Edsa, SM Megamall, SM Southmall, and SM City Iloilo, Operation Tulong Express aims to help the thousands of families that were displaced by this calamity start a new life. It is ongoing until Nov. 19.

Shoppers can bring their donations of food, clothing or cash to the Second Floor of SM City North-Edsa, the Second Level Bridgeway of the SM Megamall, the Upper Ground Level of SM Southmall, and the Upper Ground Floor of East Wing of SM Iloilo. For pick up services, one can call DZRH pager number 1418-891-833 and just leave one's name, address and telephone number.

In addition, SM Foundation victims will be launching a series of medical missions in both the city and the province of Iloilo. Medical missions are scheduled in Jaro on Nov. 12 and 13, at the La Paz district on Nov. 15 and 16 and in the Mandurriao Public Plaza on Nov. 19. These medical missions are in coordination with the Iloilo City Health Office.

MACHO MACHO MEN

Three guys--two Caucasians and a Filipino--were brave enough to volunteer for the 'Macho Macho Men Contest' during Nite Trip at Hard Rock Café. Nite Trip is the bar tour series of FM station Mellow Touch 94.7. The volunteers were challenged to 'read in their most macho way' the tagline of sponsor Premium Dry London Gin. WLL DJ Willy Smith and newscaster Celine is shown interviewing the contestants onstage. Volunteers were awarded special gift items from London Gin and Mellow Touch. Tune in to 94.7 to catch the next bar tour series coming up soon.

PETNET, RBAP SIGN SURETY BOND AGREEMENT

Petnet and the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP) recently signed a surety bond agreement. Present during the signing were (seated, from left) Petnet board of trustee member Jose O. Lustre; Petnet-Western Union president Anthony W. Lehmann, BSP Department of Rural Banks director lawyer Wilfredo B. Domo-ong; RBAP president lawyer Nicolas J. Lim, (standing, from left) RBAP NCR director Vicente Mendoza; RBAP Region II director Jan S. Sed; RBAP Region I director Myrna Lopez; RBAP VP for Mindanao Ma. Rosario T. Salvana; RBAP VP for Visayas Paz C. Radoza; RBAP Region II director Pura Romero; RBAP corporate secretary Virgilio S. Ccronado Jr.; RBAP Region IV director Cesar Marasigan, and RBAP Region VI director Meltrotsky D. Alpas.

LIBRARIANS' STUDY VISIT

Librarians from different universities and institutions recently attended a Study Visit to different libraries in Singapore and Malaysia. The participants seated (from left) were Emy Oglesby, Medy Gregorio, Ann Garcia, Susan Pador, Tessie Tamayo and Ellen Revatoris. Standing (from left) were MonaLisa Legulab, Tessie Moran, Nancy Tuason, Lourdes Roman, Marlo Chavez, Erlinda Flores, Tony Santos, Mharlo Pua, Bella Lucas, Anthony Fontanilla, Rhodora Bautista, Mitos Pascual, Roxanne Jocson, Victorina David, Gloria del Mundo, Charity Mahusay and Rebecca Jocson.

RSBS 25TH YEAR

The Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines celebrated its 25th anniversary in a week-long affair from Oct. 8 to 15 with the theme 'Kapit Bisig sa Bagong Simula at Adhikain: Sa Kawal-Pilipino, Magandang Bukas Pagtibayin.' Shown are RSBS officers and loyalty awardees posing for posterity. Seated, from left are: Francisco Paredes, RSBS president; Cesar M. Jayme, Jr., AFP chair; Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio P. Villanueva; chief finance officer Amelia H.C. Yiagan, and EVP for operations Honorio S. Azcueta. Also shown are the 15, 20 and 25-year loyalty awardees.

Taiwan gains WTO entry in China's steps

DOHA, Qatar—The World Trade Organization approved Taiwan's entry on Sunday, a day after welcoming China into the trade body, in a move that will increase economic integration between the political rivals.

"You have just made a very wise and important decision. Taiwan will honor its commitment by following the rules of the WTO and actively participating in all its work," Taiwanese Economic Affairs Minister Lin Hsin-i told WTO ministers.

Taiwan is the world's 14th largest trading economy and had sought entry for 12 years.

Minutes after approval, China's foreign trade minister welcomed Taiwan's entry but ruled out direct trade links unless Taipei acknowledged Beijing's sovereignty over the island.

China considers Taiwan a renegade province and has threatened to invade if Taipei declares independence.

Taiwan's accession will mark a step into the unknown as both sides try to define their political relationship after being made equal members of the same club.

To dodge the sensitive political issue, Taiwan will formally enter the WTO as the "separate customs territory" of Taiwan and its offshore islands of Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu. Taiwan aims to enter the WTO in January after legislative approval, officials said.

China sought in vain an assurance from the WTO that the body would never hold a ministerial meeting in Taiwan and that it would place curbs on the island's representation at WTO meetings, officials said.

While China and Taiwan have expressed a wish for broader economic ties after WTO entry, analysts say a thaw in chilly political relations is unlikely in the short term.

WTO ministers approved Taiwan's entry in Doha, capital of the Gulf state of Qatar, at a meeting that is debating whether to launch a new global trade round.

US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick said Taiwan had transformed itself into an economic powerhouse in the last two decades while building a democratic system of government.

"Taiwan is a striking model for others to follow and I hope they will," he told WTO ministers.

The world's trade ministers approved China's entry on Saturday, ending a 15-year quest. Beijing, which insisted that it enter before Taiwan, reacts angrily to attempts by the island to raise its international stature.

Taiwan is desperate to improve its economy, in its worst shape in nearly three decades, as the ruling Democratic Progressive Party readies for legislative elections in December.

Days before the WTO meeting, Taiwan lifted a 50-year ban on direct trade and investment in China to improve President Chen Shui-bian's standing and offer a goodwill gesture to Beijing, which must still approve the move.

Taiwan had banned direct trade and transport links with China at the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949, sending cargo and traffic to the mainland through roundabout routes, usually Hong Kong.

Taiwanese firms have already poured $60 billion into China since rapprochement began in the late 1980s.

Taipei has urged discussion of direct transport links through the WTO, but China says acceptance of its cherished "one China" policy is needed for talks.

"We hope Taiwan will seize this historic opportunity and recognize the principle of one China and under this principle realize the three links," Shi, China's trade minister, told a news conference.

The so-called "three links" refer to direct shipping, trade and postal services.

Some say Taiwan could force the issue, using the WTO to resolve trade disputes with China.

A requirement by one WTO member that another's cargo ships go through a third country is discriminatory, analysts say. A solution would be for Taiwanese ships to pass through the waters of another country or region, process paperwork at sea without making port and travel on to mainland China. *"Reuters*

China entry to WTO to take effect Dec. 11

BEIJING—China was on Monday beginning the countdown to formal membership of the World Trade Organization after racing through the formalities to cap a memorable year on the international stage.

Announcing formal accession would take effect on Dec. 11, Chinese Trade Minister Shi Guangsheng Sunday signed the agreement papers a day after WTO members meeting in Doha, Qatar, approved Beijing's entry to the global trade body.

To join the WTO after receiving approval from existing members, a country has to have the decision ratified by its national parliament before waiting a set 30-day period for accession.

But China circumvented any delays by arranging for its legislature, the National People's Congress, to ratify the WTO decision on Aug. 25, months before it had even been taken—although the move was only made public on Friday.

Chinese officials deposited articles of ratification signed by President Jiang Zemin with the WTO secretariat immediately after Saturday's consensus decision by the 142 organization members.

The almost unseemly rush illustrated that China's leaders did not want to add further to the country's 15-year wait to join, analysts said Monday. *AFP*

Taiwan, China WTO entry to thaw ties

TAIPEI—The admission of Taiwan and China to the World Trade Organization will foster closer economic ties that can lead to warmer relations between the two foes, officials and analysts say.

Both sides of the Taiwan Strait should shelve the thorny sovereignty issue while pushing for trade ties under the WTO framework and try to build up mutual trust, they say.

President Chen Shui-bian said Monday that the step would push normalization in economic ties between the two sides but lamented Beijing had tried to "dwarf our international status, squeeze our international space" during the access negotiations.

Chen Ming-tung, vice chair of the Mainland Affairs Council that charts the island's China policy, has said Taipei hopes to ease friction with Beijing and gradually improve ties under WTO rules.

"More frequent economic and trade exchanges of the two sides are expected," Chen told reporters Thursday.

"Hopefully, the two sides can subsequently try to seek a mechanism that may eventually lead to political integration (of the two sides)."

The WTO ministers meeting in Qatar endorsed Taiwan's membership Sunday, allowing the island to join the 142-member body as a custom territory—"Chinese Taipei"—after 12 years of strenuous talks.

China, which considers the island part of its terri- [illegible]

"Direct contact across the Strait has to begin somewhere and a start from the economic front would help build mutual trust," said Yan Jian-fa, Chinese affairs director of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party.

"It's like taking an exam—you work on the easier part first. If we cannot solve the core problem right now, we can at least try to resolve the marginal differences," Yan said. *AFP*

Hong Kong to face stiff competition

HONG KONG—The free-wheeling capitalist free-trade hub of Hong Kong is expected to face stiff competition from China once the mainland joins the World Trade Organization in 30 days, analysts say.

Government officials, however, in trying to calm fears Hong Kong will lose its traditional role of a middleman following China's accession to the WTO, are confident the territory will benefit.

Analysts expect Hong Kong to face strong competition despite the fact China's entry to the global trade body will provide tremendous opportunities to tap the lucrative mainland market.

"Hong Kong is set to face a stiff competition, but it will pressure Hong Kong to do the best," Paul Tang, an economist at Bank of East Asia, said Monday.

"It is inevitable. Hong Kong has to face the big challenges ahead," said Tang.

"Hong Kong's traditional role as a middleman will be squeezed," he said, as mainland China could directly trade with foreign companies.

But Tang expects the market to integrate, by creating new opportunities, saying, "we know what sort of opportunity lies ahead," referring to Hong Kong's vital role in helping China's opening up to the outside world some two decades ago.

Joseph Cheng, a political commentator, said he believed Hong Kong could still "keep up with innovation and productivity" to have an equal share of "big China's pie."

"We have perfect freedom of speech and rules of law that could enable our service industry to carry on," he said.

He said Hong Kong stood out against other cities with its fully convertible currency, well-developed infrastructure and legal system as well as clean and transparent business environment.

"China's WTO entry means more opportunities and keen competition" with mainland cities, said Cheng.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong Financial Secretary Antony Leung told reporters on Monday that more foreign firms would invest in the mainland as a result of China's WTO entry.

"Hong Kong being China's biggest commercial and financial market will be greatly benefited," he said, adding China's WTO entry could at least bring 0.5-percent growth to the territory.

Leung said Hong Kong's role as middleman would be not be affected, adding that "the pie is big."

Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, in welcoming China's entry to the WTO, said the territory was well-placed to play a vital role in China's growing market, both as a source of investment and as a partner to overseas firms looking to strengthen their presence on the mainland.

Hong Kong Chief Secretary Donald Tsang told reporters Hong Kong would certainly gain from a slice of the "bigger pie" of the mainland and global economies. *AFP*

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XTO A/T	773,000	106,660	31,036	22,237	386,500	12,222	8,891
XTO M/T	733,000	108,600	29,430	21,086	366,500	11,853	8,621
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SPUG-MMSS-01-028

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The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

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(PDI – Nov. 13, 2001)

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1)	X-ray unit	1 set
2)	X-ray line sensor	1 set
3)	Foreign substance detection unit	1 set
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5)	Operation panel	1 set
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7)	Casing	1 set
8)	Reject system	1 set
9)	TV monitor	1 set

The schedule of the bidding activities is as follows:

Particulars	Date/Time	Place
Pre-qualification	Nov. 15-22/8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	SPMO
Issuance of Bid Documents	Nov. 26-29/8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	SPMO
Pre-bid conference	Dec. 7 Fri/10:00 a.m.	SPMO
Opening/submission of bids	Dec. 14 Fri/10:00 a.m.	SPMO

Interested parties may secure the checklist of pre-qualification requirements and submit pre-qualification documents to the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO).

Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to secure bid documents from SPMO and participate in the bidding process.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO**
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(PDI – Nov. 12 & 13, 2001)

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ZENAIDA CAPILI LUMBA

August 20, 1932 -- November 3, 2001

The Lumba-Capili family would like to express profound gratitude for your spontaneous love, sympathy and support at her untimely demise on November 3, 2001.

We found strength and are humbly grateful to God in knowing that she touched so many lives and organizations in her concern for others. She will continue to live in our hearts.

We wish to express as well, our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and message of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

The Mass will be offered on Thursday, November 15, 2001 at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church at 6:30 p.m. to culminate our 9-day novena.

ROBERT (BOBBY) C. LEE

December 23, 1943 – November 13, 2000

Masses will be offered on November 13, 2001
at the following churches:

Mount Carmel Church *New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 AM
Basilica Minore of Our Lady of Piat *Piat, Cagayan*	6:00 AM
Divine Word Mission Seminary *Christ the King, Quezon City*	6:30 AM
Society of The Divine Word *Sacred Heart of Jesus, Kamuning*	7:00 AM
Mary The Queen *Greenhills*	6:00 PM

His loving wife ***Fatima (Patty), Anne Kathleen, Ryan Robertson, Camille Jayne,*** *and* ***Ronald Robertson*** *request relatives, friends and pious readers to include him in their prayers.*

ILUMINADA C. SIOCHI

**Third Order of Our Blessed Lady of Mt. Carmel
and of St. Therese of the Child Jesus
(October 17, 1918 - November 10, 2001)**

Luming peacefully returned to her Creator to join her parents ***MELITON*** *and* ***ANICIA****; her sister* ***ROSALINA****; and brothers* ***JOSE*** *and* ***ALBERTO*** *on November 10, 2001.*

Her bereaved brother and his wife Felix and Ursula (†); nieces and nephews, grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for her eternal repose. She was a loving and devoted sister and Tita. She will be terribly missed.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at 51 A. Gervasio St., Hulong Duhat, Malabon and will be buried on Thursday, November 15, 2001 at the Malabon Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

So Lovingly Remembered
So Sadly Missed

Our Beloved

Gaudencio Embuscado Antonino

*ON THE DAY OF THE THIRTY FOURTH ANNIVERSARY
OF HIS BIRTH TO ETERNAL LIFE
NOVEMBER 13, 1967*

HIS WIFE, MAGNOLIA TOGETHER WITH THEIR CHILDREN,
GRAND CHILDREN AND GREAT GRAND CHILDREN
REQUESTS RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND PIOUS READERS TO PRAY FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL

MASSES WILL BE HELD - MT. CARMEL - 6:00 pm
- JAEN, NUEVA ECIJA - 6:30 am

---

*I am the resurrection
and the life.
He who believes in
Me will live, even
though he dies, and
whoever believes in
Me will never die.*
John 11:25-26

LEONARDA ACTAS RAMIREZ

"Leoning"

*Peacefully joined her Creator on November 8, 2001
at the age of 87.*

Her bereaved children **BOY** and **TITA, BABY** and **LETTY, JUN** and **LILY, ODETTE, LENETTE, POTEET** and **BEDA, MITCHOY**; grandchildren, brother, sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, November 14, 2001 at Eternal Gardens, Baesa, Kalookan City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. John the Baptist Church, Pinaglabanan St., San Juan, Metro Manila.

In Loving Memory
on the 20th Death Anniversary of

LONNIE SUN

who passed away on November 13, 1981
and for

AMBASSADOR PATRICK PICHI SUN

who passed away on February 10, 1986.
The family asks friends and readers to say a prayer
for their everlasting happiness.

In Loving Memory

on his Death Anniversary

FLORENCIO MELLORIN LEPORGO, SR.

May 12, 1943 - November 13, 2000

Holy Masses today at:

St. Vincent Ferrer Parish, *Surigao City*	5:30 PM
San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish, *Surigao City*	5:30 PM
Mayapa Parish, *Calamba, Laguna*	6:00 PM
San Antonio de Padua Parish, *Los Baños, Laguna*	6:30 PM
Basilica del Sto. Niño, *Cebu City*	8:00 AM
San Isidro Parish, *Taft Avenue, Pasay City*	6:30 PM

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COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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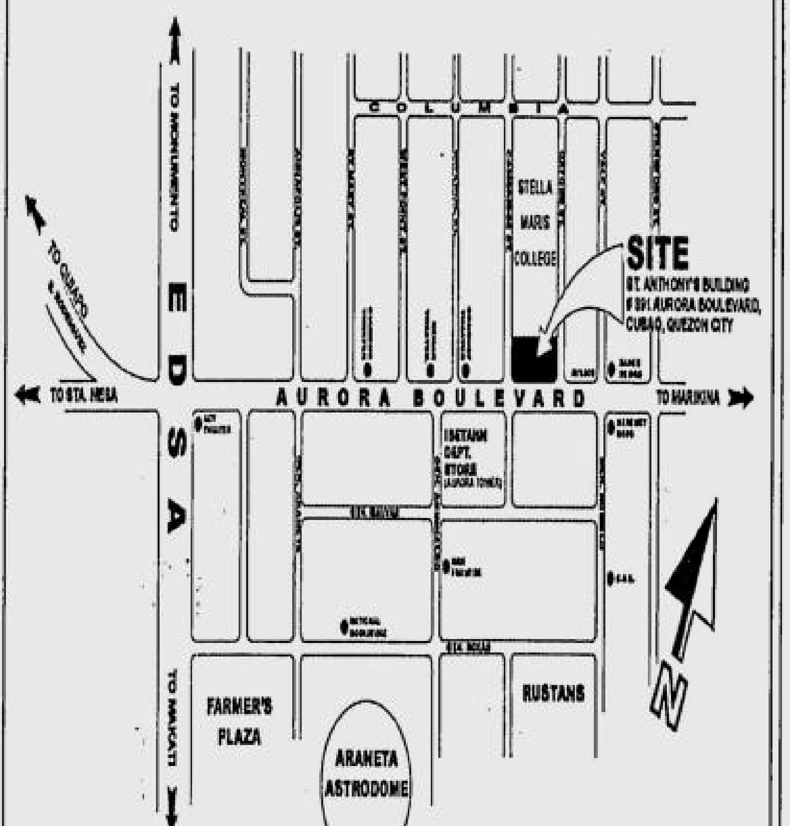


REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Japan eyes construction imports from RP

JAPAN is urging the Philippine construction industry to supply the huge requirements of the Japanese housing market.

This invitation comes from the Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro), which is participating in the forthcoming Philconstruct exhibition at the World Trade Center, Manila, to help local housing and construction firms for that purpose.

Philconstruct, which will be held on Nov. 15-18, will enable Jetro Manila to answer queries on the matter, including next year's exhibitions in Tokyo and Osaka for foreign suppliers.

Citing Japan's growing need for imported construction materials, Jetro said some 1.23 million housing units were built only last year, one of the world's highest records, next to that of the United States.

Said Jetro in a press statement: "The Japanese housing market has changed drastically with consumers now looking for quality as well as design. Trends toward barrier-free ecologically responsible and healthy housing have increased interest in imported materials such as double glazed windows, solid wooden doors and floorings. These materials are now being used in the renovations market as well as condominiums and apartment houses."

To enable Filipino suppliers to introduce their products to the Japanese market, Jetro is inviting them to participate in the Housing Materials Exhibition in Japan.

The exhibition, the 13th since 1996, forms part of Jetro's import promotion efforts and will open in April up to September 2002 at the Import Mart, Ikebukuro Sunshine City in Tokyo and at the ITM Building, Asia-Pacific Trade Center in Osaka.

These exhibition centers were established in 1996 to serve as a permanent display facility for high-quality and well-designed housing and construction materials of foreign manufacturers, exporters, dealers, government organizations, Japanese importers and businessmen.

The exhibition area of the World Import Market is 1,300 square meters less than that of the Asia-Pacific Trade Center, which occupies 1,400 sq. m. Both can house up to 40 to 50 display booths with meeting spaces, reception and conference facilities.

The six-month exhibition will also feature seminars, consultations, direct mail campaign, business support system and market briefings aimed at helping exhibitors penetrate the Japanese market.

Its marketing campaign involves advertisements in major housing and construction magazines as well as dissemination of reference materials, newsletters and other publications, for which Jetro's database of Japanese housing firms has also been tapped.

Previous exhibitions in both centers had attracted Japanese consumers, builders, design planners/architects, wholesalers, housing manufacturers and general construction professionals.

Legarda pushes creation of housing dep't

SENATE Majority Leader Loren Legarda yesterday stressed the need to create a Department of Housing to address the critical shortage of housing, especially for the poor.

Legarda noted that the Macapagal administration has made it one of its centerpiece programs to provide housing for the poor.

She said the creation of a Cabinet level agency for housing will provide added impetus to said objective. Moreover, the new department will put under one roof all agencies that have to do with housing, thus promoting efficiency and better coordination, she added.

At the same time, Legarda called for additional funding for housing in the government's budget for the next fiscal year.

In filing Senate Bill 1546, Legarda said there is a need to rationalize the functions of several housing agencies which are currently being coordinated by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

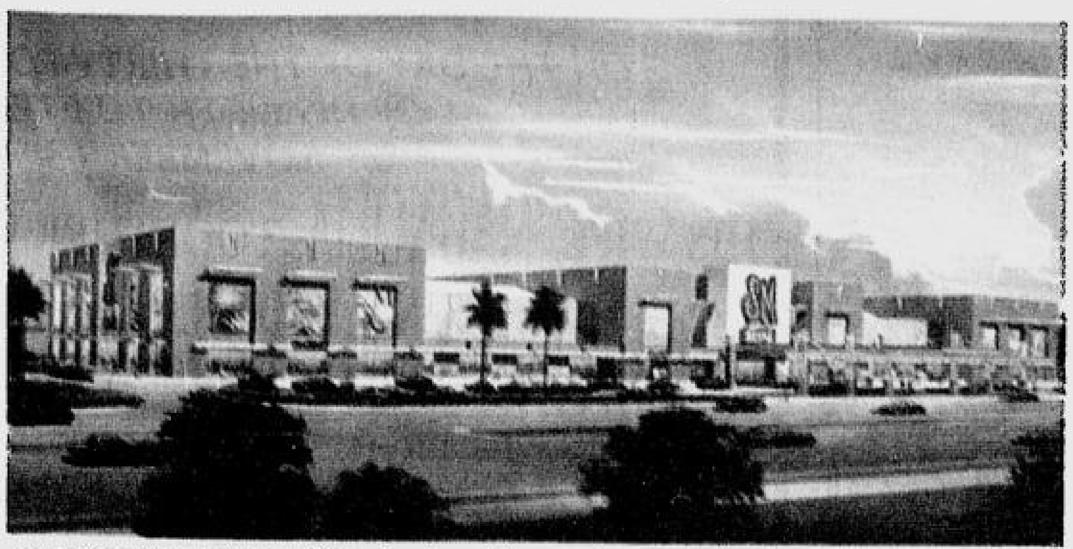
"It is timely that we consolidate all housing concerns under one central unit through the creation of an entity that can oversee all housing activities and implement projects and programs that will provide ample housing for the greatest possible number of people," Legarda said.

She added that under the present setup, several of the functions of several housing overlap, if not working at cross purposes, resulting in the wastage of badly needed funds.

Under the bill, the Department of Housing and Urban Planning will take over all the functions of the HUDCC and its attached agencies such as the NHA, HLURB, NHMFC, the Pag-Ibig Fund and several other agencies.

These housing agencies started with the creation of the human settlements ministry under the Marcos regime. Many other similar agencies were created by succeeding administrations resulting in the overlapping of functions.

The proposed bill provides that several existing agencies may only have to be attached to the department and would not be abolished altogether.



SM CITY Davao will bring SM's shopping, leisure and entertainment excitement to the Mindanao region.

Mindanao's first SM mall opens Saturday in Davao

SM CITY Davao, SM Prime Holdings' 12th SM Supermall, will be open to the public on Nov. 17. SM's first mall in the Mindanao region is located in Ecoland, Barangay Matina, Quimpo Boulevard, Davao City.

The 76,000-square-meter three-level mall will bring SM's shopping, leisure and entertainment excitement to Davao. Considered the largest city in the world in terms of land area, Davao City is a bustling and dynamic melting pot and business center. It is the hub of small and medium industries, education, government and media centers, as well as residential subdivisions for growing families.

SM City Davao will also serve customers in the Region 11 area—Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur and Compostela Valley as well as the nearby provinces of Cotobato, Bukidnon, Agusan and Butuan. These areas are the sites of thriving agricultural, fishing and mining companies as well as multinational corporation investments.

The mall is an exciting mix of the best of Manila, Cebu and Davao tenants, as well as international food and retail chains. It will have about 200 stores, restaurants, leisure and entertainment areas when completed.

Leading the shopping excitement is the SM Department Store with its quality merchandise at reasonable prices, one-stop shopping convenience, and service that have made it part of the lives of many Filipinos. Other SM mall mainstays include the SM Supermarket, SM Appliance Center, Surplus Shop, Health and Beauty, Family Drugstore, Toy Kingdom and ACE Hardware.

Completing the shopping excitement are fashion boutiques, shoe stores, bookstores, jewelry stores, home furnishing stores and specialty shops.

Dining out options at the mall include the SM Food Court, where one can get good food fast, as well as specialty restaurants and well-known fast-food chains like Jollibee, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, KFC and Pancake House.

Mall goers can look forward to family leisure fun at the SM Cinema, which will have six state of the art theaters and at amusement areas like Worlds of Fun.

DPWH head opens building trade exhibit

DATUMANONG

PUBLIC Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong will lead the opening day rites for the 11th Philconstruct, Southeast Asia's premier trade show for the building and construction industries. Philconstruct is slated on Nov. 15-18 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

Justo Manalo, president of the Philippine Constructors Association which organizes the annual Philconstruct, will deliver the welcome address. To acknowledge the guests is Jose Amado R. Angeles, president of the Association of Construction Equipment Lessors (Acel), an organization supporting the major trade event.

Significant facet

The 11th Philconstruct takes on another significant facet of the trade show's relevance as it brings together players in the building and construction industries to plot proactive modes of conducting business in the face of current economic developments.

Philconstruct will showcase more than 5,000 products and services, including architectural, interior decorating, engineering products, building machinery and heavy equipment, professional services for building and construction, power tools, hardware, low- cost housing, IT- related products and services as well as research, literature and education, institutions and associations.

Country pavilions

The country pavilions, numbering 15, will be a major part of the fair. Each pavilion will feature the many products and technology invented or manufactured in their countries.

Both the US Commercial Service and the Austrade will occupy 20 booths each. Sixteen booths are allotted for the Malaysia External Trade Development. The Embassy of France will have four booths while the Italian Trade Commission will have three. There will also be booths for the embassies of Japan, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Czech Republic, Indonesia, India and Finland as well as for the British Embassy.

A two-day technology forum will also be held as part of Philconstruct. It will highlight the equipment manager's course that will provide participants with an overview of the decision-making process in the selection of equipment, rental and purchase, operation and administration, equipment maintenance and repairs, disposal and replacement and equipment safety.

Realty developer readies Cavite mall

CUEVASVILLE Realty and Development Corp. is putting the finishing touches to its new mall in Bacoor Cavite.

The mall, Cuevasville Plaza—due to open on Dec. 15—is the latest consumer attraction to hit the province which has been experiencing economic boom in years.

Cavite provincial board member Raffy Rodriguez says that Cuevasville Plaza will certainly help brighten up the coming holidays since the mall will cater more to the middle and lower classes.

"There is no doubt that the mall will increase consumer spending here," Rodriguez says, adding that Cavite "is probably one of the country's economic centers in which the impact of the recent financial crisis has not been so severe."

Rodriguez explains that Cavite has had years of economic boom behind it and this has helped lessen the effect of the economic crisis.

Living testament

Cuevasville Plaza is a four-story building on a 32,000-square-meter lot. It is brownout-free, assuring shoppers of nonstop air-conditioning convenience. It also boasts of state-of-the-art cinemas, elevators and escalators.

Rodriguez says the new mall is a living testament to the popularity of his province among local and foreign investors.

The province is a far cry from what it was years before. It has successfully ranked itself among the world's fastest growing economies mainly because of no-nonsense governance and excellent peace and order situation. Its controversial no-strike policy especially in its economic zones has reaped robust economic dividends and applause from foreign investors.

Employment

Rodriguez says that based on the available data from the National Statistics Office, Cavite has a share of 23.59 percent of the regional employment from 1990 to 1995. However, this province contributed only 9.39 percent in regional employment growth during the 1990-1995 period.

It is estimated that if the trend continues, employment in Cavite will reach 580,175 by year 2002, an increase of 134,375 from the 1995 employment figure.

He adds that the manufacturing, construction transportation, trade and services sectors contributed significantly to the employment growth in the province during the five-year period of 1990-1995, thereby offsetting the decrease in employment in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Employment in the manufacturing sector almost doubled from 52,205 to 97,500 or an increase of 86.76 percent. At the rate it is going (13.31 percent per annum), it is projected that the sector will have 169,059 employment by year 2002.

"The positive growth of the five aforementioned sectors is due mainly to fast urban development, private and public sector investments and improved domestic demand in Cavite. This growth will continue until year 2002 as the needed infrastructure support increases and the utilities, trade and services sectors expand as a result of increased industrial activities in key areas of the province," Rodriguez concludes.

STRUCTURAL COMPLETION

Megaworld Corp. recently held a topping-off ceremony to mark the structural completion of the 27-story third tower of the Eastwood Lafayette residential development at Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City. From left are engineer Ariel Zarate of LG Goldstar Elevators Phils., Design Alliance architect Jhun Bayot, Eastwood Property Holdings vice president John Natividad, Ophir Construction Corp. president Cesar Natividad and Chris Shearer of Seapac Phils. The Eastwood Lafayette condominium series features spacious studio and one-bedroom residences and amenities including a five-star-hotel-standard lobby.

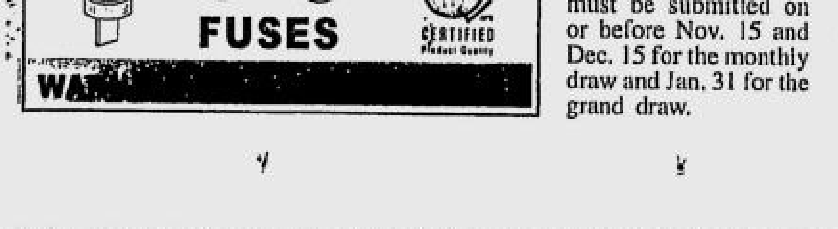
HGC bathroom fixtures holds first monthly raffle draw

HCG BATHROOM Fixtures held its first monthly Getaway Raffle Draw last Oct. 31 at Robinsons Place Manila. The major raffle draw winner was entitled to a five-day trip for two to Australia.

The event, highlighted by an exciting program for guests that included band and dance numbers and two interactive games, is a kick-off to the three subsequent monthly raffle draws. Prizes at stake are trips for two to China, Italy and a Grand Alaskan Cruise in November, December and February, respectively. The program also includes a showcase of HCG products.

A P2,000 purchase of HCG bathroom fixtures and accessories entitles one to join. There will be four raffle draws. One winner will be drawn on Oct. 31, Nov. 29, Dec. 22 and Feb. 15.

Raffle coupons must be submitted on or before Nov. 15 and Dec. 15 for the monthly draw and Jan. 31 for the grand draw.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Business partners remain loyal to Crown Asia

WHILE many businessmen would avoid operating when the economy is at a downturn, two real estate brokers look at the crisis as a provider of positive opportunities for growth.

For Phillip D. Chua of PDC Realty and Myrna Constantino of MC Realty, an economic crisis is a chance for them to explore more avenues to reach their goal of selling houses and lots for property developer Crown Asia.

Crown Asia has long had a reputation in the industry for its unflinching faith in the resiliency of the local real estate market. It is a belief backed by experience and its unsurpassed knowledge of the needs and wants of its target market—the middle-income sector.

Phillip says that Crown Asia's positive outlook on the market has rubbed off on many of the firm's brokers and property managers. He remains hopeful about finding a positive side on the current global crisis that has affected all business sectors. "We can do something about it, we can exert more effort and do things we have not done before that can help us find more sales," he says.

"Never lose hope," echoes Myrna. "I have always been a positive thinker. *Mas masipag ako pag* crisis. Challenge *sa akin 'yon* (I'm more hardworking in times of crisis. For me, it's a challenge.)."

Commitment

Phillip and Myrna are pioneer business partners for Crown Asia. Both are determined to remain with Crown Asia because of the property developer's commitment to assist their brokers, business partners and property consultants.

"There are seminars where we learn and sharpen our selling skills, marketing support and they teach you how to go about forming your organization until you reach the peak of your capabilities," says Myrna. "After that, *nakaalalay pa rin sila sa iyo* (they still support you)."

Phillip was able to know firsthand just how supportive Crown Asia can be. "In 1997, we were affected by the economic slowdown, but we were able to survive with the support of Crown Asia," he says.

"In fact, my group is still intact and still growing, even with this downtrend in the country," Phillip adds.

PDC Realty was an offshoot of the successful VM Chua Realty, headed by his wife Violy, which sold properties for Camella Homes.

"I believe that you have to have plan in order to achieve what you want to achieve," Philip states.

Phillip, a former overseas Filipino worker (OFW), opened PDC Realty in 1995 after he spoke to Crown Asia's Normita Gimena and Jing Sernano, who convinced him to create the firm to work only on Crown Asia projects.

Myrna was actually a Crown Asia homeowner first before she became a broker. She is wife to a manufacturing manager of URC and mother to a 16-year-old son.

Far better than others

Myrna had been an agent for other developers but when she joined Crown Asia, after speaking with Gimena and Serrano, she opted to stay.

"I stuck it out with Crown Asia because their projects and the working environment are far better than the others. That alone convinced me to commit to them and tell them that I will concentrate on selling for them," says Myrna.

She started as an in-house broker, holding office at Crown Asia, where the property developer provided a fully furnished work area for the brokers. *Doon pa lang nakaipon na ako* (During that time, I already have my savings). After a year, I was able to put up my own office."

Philip and Myrna agree that Crown Asia stood by them while they were learning the ropes of the trade. "*Di ka nila iiwanan* (They will not abandon you) unless they are sure *na kaya mo na* (that you can already make it). And even if you can stand on your feet—they are still beside you every step of the way," says Myrna.

She says the attention showered on brokers, managers and property consultants by officials and employees of Crown Asia has rubbed off on her and her agents.

Myrna says they assist buyers up to the time they have actually moved into their new home. "They appreciate it very much and they refer us to their friends who are looking for a home and this means more clients for us," she adds.

The strength of Crown Asia's sales networks lie in the fact that they develop a personal relationship with them. It is the kind that money can't buy and the kind that stays with your partner through thick or thin.

Gov't agency decentralizes urban poor home loans

STARTING next month the housing loans for community associations of informal settlers will be granted by the regional and zonal offices of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. as the government agency decentralizes this function. This move will further cut down the processing time of loans under its Community Mortgage Program.

NHMFC president Angelico T. Salud said that as an initial step the accreditation of CMP loan originators—either a local government unit, a national government agency/corporation, or a nongovernment organization—will now be undertaken by NHMFC's regional branches. Also included is the enrolment of the community association's proposed project.

These functions to be devolved consist of the most critical steps in the CMP loan process, which comprise some 50 percent of the implementation phase of the urban poor home financing program, he said.

Under the plan, the NHMFC's regional and zonal offices in Regions 1, 5, 6, 7, 10 and 11, including its satellite offices in Bacolod City and General Santos City, will be empowered to accept, process and approve the applications for accreditation from applicant CMP loan originators, who assist the community associations of informal settlers in community organizing and loan availment, among other things.

Likewise, they will be allowed to conduct at the regional level, the background investigation of the community associations' to determine their legitimacy, capability to enter into a loan agreement, as well as their capacity to repay the CMP loan.

In addition, the regional or zonal offices will also be tasked to conduct project site inspection and property appraisal to determine, among other things, the acceptability of the collateral and the pricing for the land, subject of loan.

Prior to total devolution of the loan processes, the conduct of loan and mortgage examination will still be done at the central office including the grant of letter of guaranty to pay the cost of the property to the landowner and the eventual release of CMP loan proceeds, Salud explained.

Even at this stage, the regional offices will also assist in coordinating and monitoring the compliance by the community associations in their respective jurisdictions, with the other loan documentary requirements, to help facilitate the release of the loan proceeds, Salud added.

Bicolanos pessimistic on gov't housing

BY REY NASOL,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Members of the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) in the Bicol Region are pessimistic on President Macapagal-Arroyo's housing program, which she announced during her first state-of-the-nation address.

They believed more Bicolanos would remain homeless in the coming years even as the President has dangled a massive housing program for the poor Filipinos.

Ms Macapagal has been wooing urban poor groups who were reported to have made up the main bulk of the pro-Estrada groups in the May 1 assault in Malacañang.

Promise

In various consultation meetings with urban poor groups, the President promised to build at least 300,000 new housing units for the poor every year.

Beneficiaries of and applicants to the various housing programs in Bicol, however, blame the red tape in the government, especially in the processing of their applications, while agencies involved in housing point to the very high costs of construction materials in the region as the culprit.

Officials of the various housing agencies have admitted that it is impossible to meet the demand for housing of every needing family.

Studies showed that in the past five years, only about 5 to 8 percent of the homeless Bicolanos were serviced by the different housing agencies of the government.

Statistics also showed that there are some 464,000 families who are in need of decent shelter in the region but the government is aiming to produce only 185,000 by the end of year 2004.

Not possible

Genelyn J. Balneg, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) regional officer here, admitted to the INQUIRER that it is not possible for the government to target a 100-percent production for all families needing houses.

"A 10-percent target is not very low because as always in the past, the government housing sector has always produced only from 5 to 8.5 percent of the housing need of the region," Balneg explained.

"Much is required, much is desired from the housing sector in all areas—starting from housing production, housing finance, regulations and institutional development," she said, admitting that the HUDCC has been taking only the first steps.

Hindrances

Balneg said that among the hindrances to housing program are the tedious process in availing oneself of loans and processing and issuance of the environmental compliance certificates, titles and licenses.

She also noted the absence of a national land use code and the still low completion and approval of comprehensive land use plans by the local government units.

But the worst, she said, are the exorbitant prices of construction materials such as the cement, despite the presence of a cement factory in Albay.

"It discourages private developers, especially to engage in housing," Balneg said.

She said that with the government's very limited budget and its current budget deficit of about P125 billion, it may not seem possible for us to really meet all the housing requirements of the Bicolanos—notwithstanding the housing needs of the Filipinos, in general.

"The housing sector's response to this is really captured in an action agenda that seeks to provide for general strategies or mitigating measures to address housing needs," Balneg said.

Under the tenurial security, the HUDCC is campaigning for those in the informal sector occupying public lands and government-owned lands, which are not utilized or have remained unimproved for a period of 10 years or more, to own these.

Housing sites

In Bicol, President Macapagal issued Presidential Proclamation 40 declaring the unutilized PNR lands in the province of Albay—covering the municipalities of Camalig, Bacacay, Sto. Domingo and Malilipot and the cities of Tabaco and Legazpi—and parts of Sorsogon as sites for socialized housing projects.

Balneg said that planning for any housing project is useless without budgetary support.

"That is why the different housing agencies of the government have come up with strategies to mitigate the problem and help come up with the budgetary requirements of the projects. One of this is the flotation of funds like the issuance of bonds by the HDMF," she said.

Hope

The Bicolanos have also seen hope in Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda's filing of Senate Bill 1546, creating a Department of Housing to address the critical shortage of housing, especially for the poor.

Legarda said there is a need to rationalize the functions of several housing agencies, which are currently being coordinated by the HUDCC.

At the same time, Legarda called for additional funding for housing in the government's budget for the next fiscal year.

PowerMax wins BSIA Award

POWERMAX, Visonic's latest home control and security system, has been singled out as the winner in the "Intrusion" category at the recent Security Industry Awards, held in line with the IFSEC 2001 show in Birmingham, England.

Sponsored by the British Security Industry Association (BSIA), these prestigious awards serve to highlight new products developed since February 2000 that meets the following requirements: to have a unique concept, design and performance; to use technology that is new to the security industry; and to satisfy a previously unmet customer need.

"We are honored that the BSIA has selected PowerMax for its outstanding technologies, advanced features and user-friendly operation," says Amnon Presler, Visonic's CEO.

Locally distributed by Sequtech Corp., PowerMax is a wireless system that is programmed to respond to motion, smoke and fire alarms, and can even detect water and gas leaks. Its built-in intelligence enables it to be used as a management center for an automated home, controlling heating and cooling systems, lights and appliances. It also caters to special needs of children, the elderly, handicapped and even pets.

Real estate mathematics

THE URBAN Institute of Real Estate announced that it will conduct anew the lecture on Real Estate Mathematics at the 2nd Floor, Joni's Bakeshop, Pasay Road corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, on Nov. 14, from 1:30 to 7 p.m.

The five-hour lecture will cover the principles and mathematical computations related to interest, interest formulas, cash flow diagrams, present value, future value, sinking fund, equal periodic amortization, graduated periodic payments and other interest formulas and its application to various real estate situations.

It will also include a demonstration on the computerized preparation of tables of value and its use, including calculators and computers, in computing real estate interest problems such as the mathematics of return analysis.

For inquiries, call up the Urban Institute at 681-0928 and 681-0953 (morning only) or e-mail at urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

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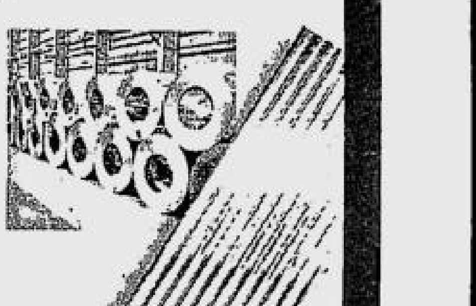

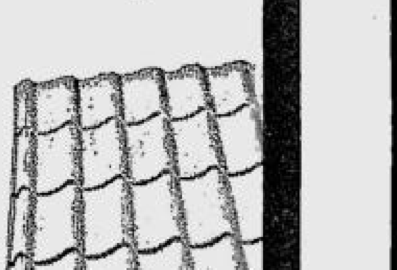

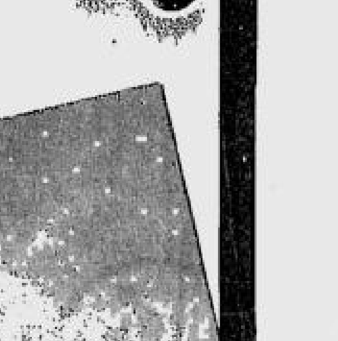

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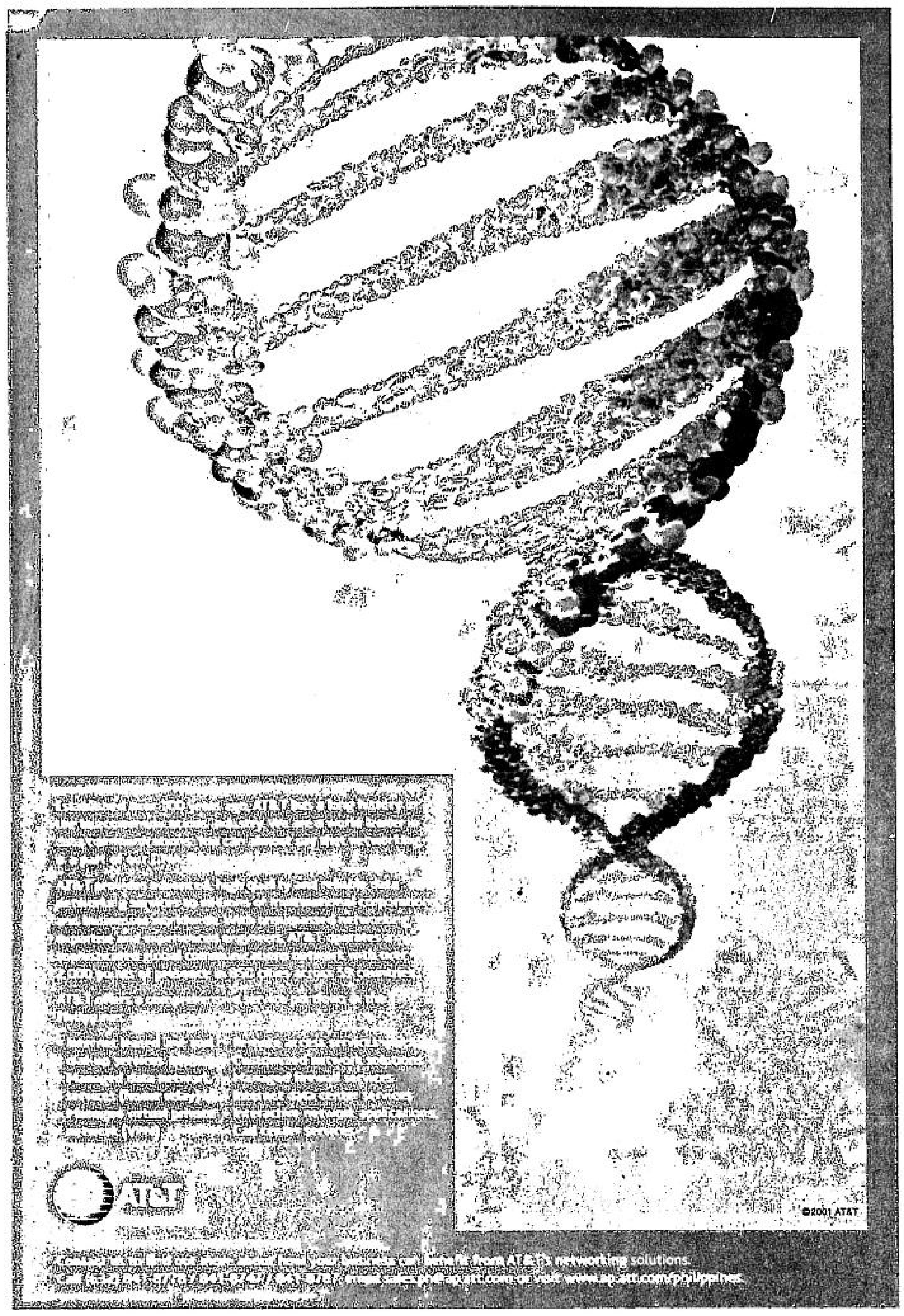
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JAL, JAS in talks to create world's 6th largest airline

TOKYO—Asia's biggest carrier, Japan Airlines Co. Ltd., said Monday that it was in merger talks with domestic rival Japan Air System Co. Ltd. in a bid to boost business, sparking government competition fears.

"A merger or closer links between the two companies is seen by senior management on both sides as a logical step," said JAL spokesperson Geoffrey Tudor.

"Whether one will be reached remains to be seen," he said, adding the pair had been in talks for a number of years over building up business ties.

But Transport Minister Chikage Ohgi said a tie-up by the pair would trigger competition issues.

"If the two companies merge, a mammoth airline will be created, so we want to observe closely the developments of the merger talks, as we are concerned that it should be in line with fair-competition policy," Ohgi told a parliamentary panel.

"The two companies will account for 50 percent of the domestic airline market and just below 80 percent of the international airline service market in Japan," she said.

JAL is already JAS' second largest shareholder with an 8.2-percent stake in the carrier.

JAL executives held an emergency board meeting Monday morning to vote on the merger, and an announcement would be made later in the day, said Japan Broadcasting Corp.

Separately, the Nihon Keizai newspaper said Sunday that the pair was finalizing details of talks that include setting up a holding company next year.

JAL president Isao Kaneko and JAS president Hiromi Funabiki had been discussing the deal and aimed to reach a final pact by the end of December, the business daily said.

The merger would be approved by respective shareholders in June 2002 with actual implementation by autumn, creating the world's sixth largest airline with a group revenue seen at 2 trillion yen ($17 billion) and 50,000 employees.

Although JAL is Japan's largest operator of international flights, its domestic market share stands at 25 percent, lagging far behind the 49 percent commanded by Japan's No. 2 carrier, All Nippon Airways Co. Ltd.

After merging with JAS, JAL would take 48 percent of Japan's airline market, the newspaper said.

JAS, for its part, has been struggling due to weak earnings and accumulated losses totaling 10 billion yen.

JAS' top shareholder, major railway firm Tokyu Corp., has decided it will be better for JAS to merge with JAL than restructure on its own, it said. *AFP*

Asia's ISP market to reach $38B in 2005, says IDC report

SINGAPORE—Asia's Internet service provider market is forecast to top $38 billion by 2005 from $12 billion this year, an industry monitor said Monday.

As competition drives subscription costs down, revenues will increasingly come from fee-based, value-added services and "bundled services" in the case of providers owned by telecommunications companies, International Data Corp. said in a report.

It said the Asia-Pacific market, excluding Japan, "will grow to more than $12 billion by end-2001 and to exceed $38 billion by 2005, representing a compound annual growth rate of 34 percent."

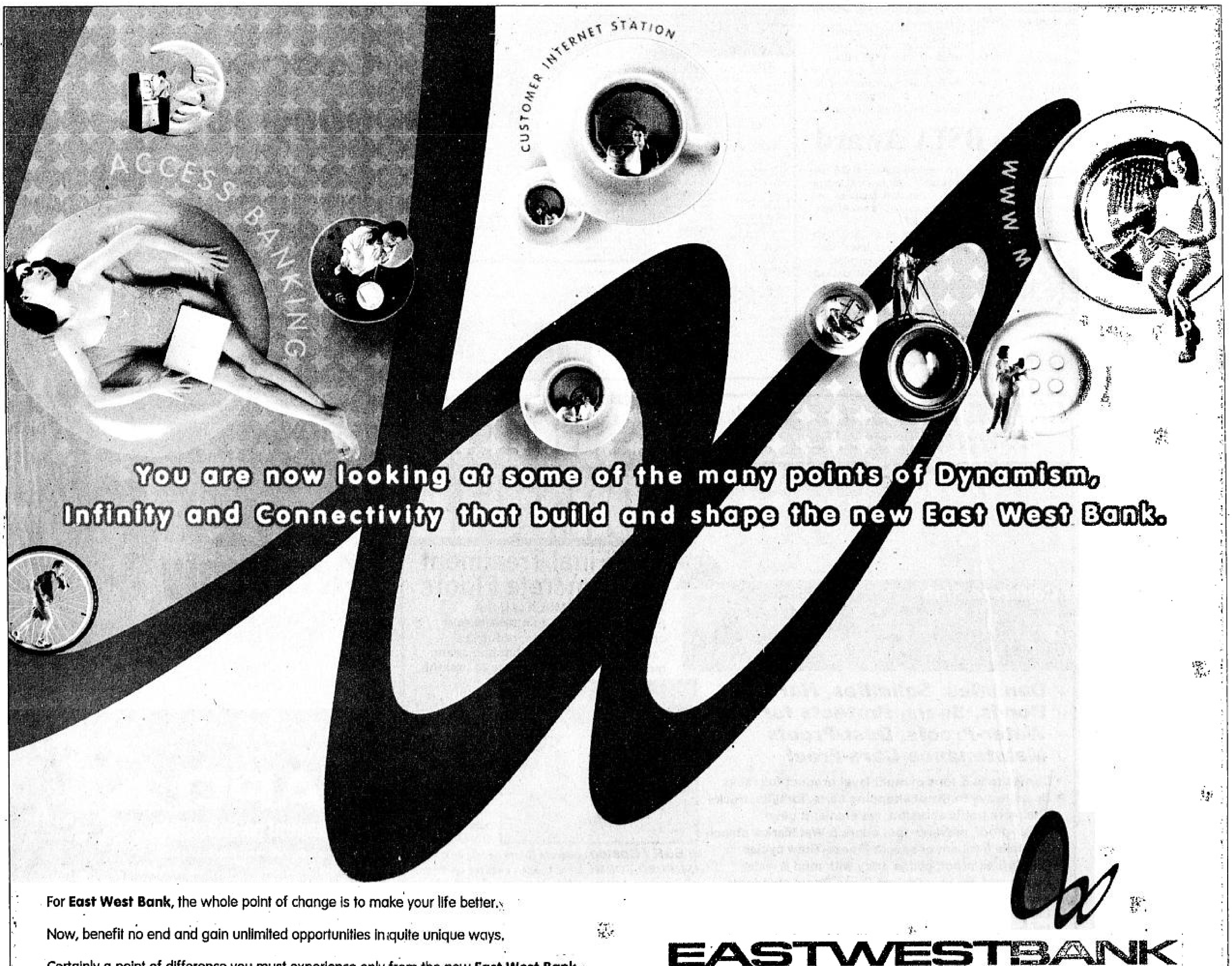
The regional ISP market was valued at $8.8 billion last year.

"With the intensification of downward pressure on Internet access fees, IDC believes that service differentiation, additional revenues from value-added services and bundled services will become key factors to continue profitability and growth in this marketplace," said Gary Hong, product manager, communications research.

"More attention is expected to be paid towards improving the quality of provider/subscriber relationships, which will be key to any ISP's potential to up-sell and cross-sell services and to earn from advertising, e-commerce or some other additional revenue source," Hong said.

Growth in subscribers of broadband Internet access, which allows for faster and broader access than the current dial-up process, is expected to increase as fees are reduced due to more competition.

Revenue from value-added services is expected to exceed 19 percent of total earnings in Asia-Pacific by 2005 from 13 percent this year. *AFP*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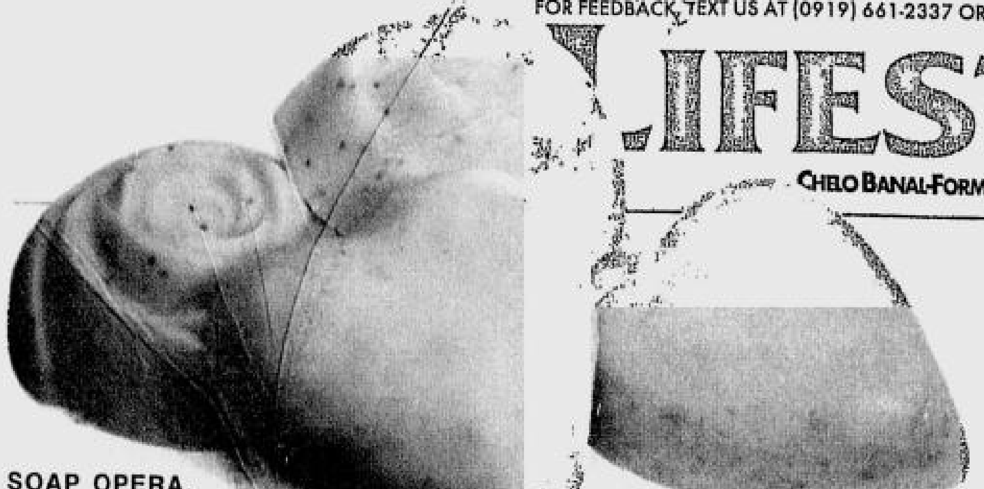

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Origins of a relaxing bath

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Mike Alquinto

EVEN as a young girl, Rose Martin-Manzano had been blessed with fabulous skin and a bright and cheery disposition.

"I wasn't really that particular about caring for my skin but, you know, as you grow older…," and she lets out a girlish laugh.

Marriage to college sweetheart Babet Manzano soon brought forth three children and Rose found herself busy caring for her growing family. "I had a lot of small business ventures before but sometime in 1999, I got tired of shifting from one venture to another and so I prayed for God to bless me with a business that I would truly enjoy," she recalls.

A whiz in the kitchen who loves to experiment with new dishes, Rose began to dabble in making natural soaps.

"She would give them as gifts to friends and relatives," says Babet. "Christmas 1999, all our gifts were made by Rose." The recipients enjoyed the soaps so much that they started to place orders. "Soon I realized, hey, there must be a business," Rose looks back.

Bath Origins (tel. 434-0941) was clearly God's answer to her prayers.

Rose then took a basic soap-making class with a good friend and from there browsed through tons of books on the art of aromatherapy, soapmaking and creating bath and massage oils. She applied to her creations the same passion and interest that she had for cooking, painstakingly experimenting and testing each and every product—both on herself and other family members. "It's not a glamorous job at all, lots of hard work," she says in mock complaint. However, Rose clearly enjoys her job and reaps the benefits as well—she has maintained her youthful appearance and a natural bubbliness. Perhaps using the soap and taking whiffs of the aromatherapy oils that she herself concocts have something to do with it.

All-natural

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils for therapeutic effects. "These essential oils have been praised for their fragrance and their positive effects on the body, mind and spirit," Rose explains. "At Bath Origins we work with everything that is all-natural. All our products are biodegradable and environmentally friendly."

ORIGINS/ p.C4

BLESSINGS. "Bath Origins is an answered prayer," says Rose Martin-Manzano, with husband Babet.

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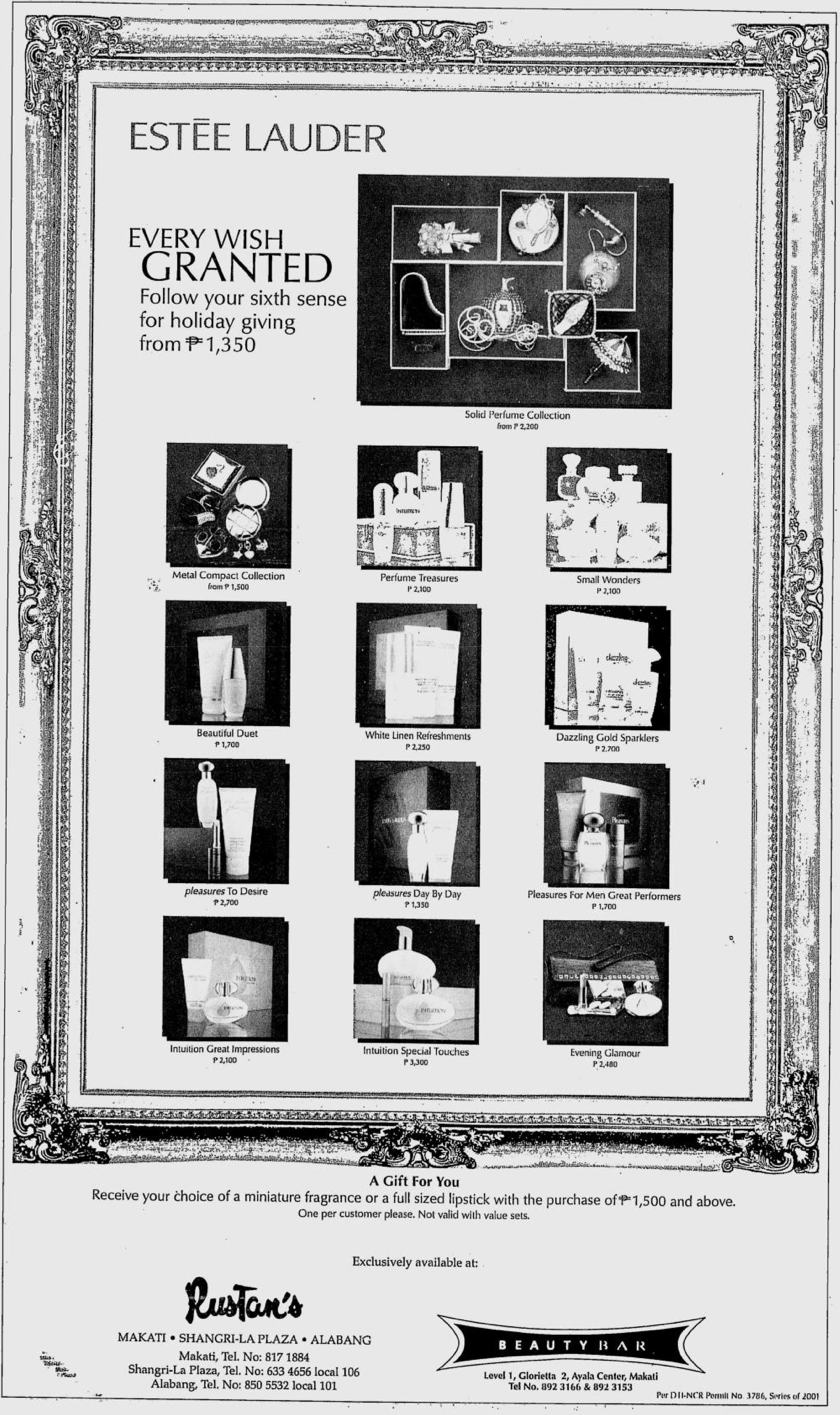

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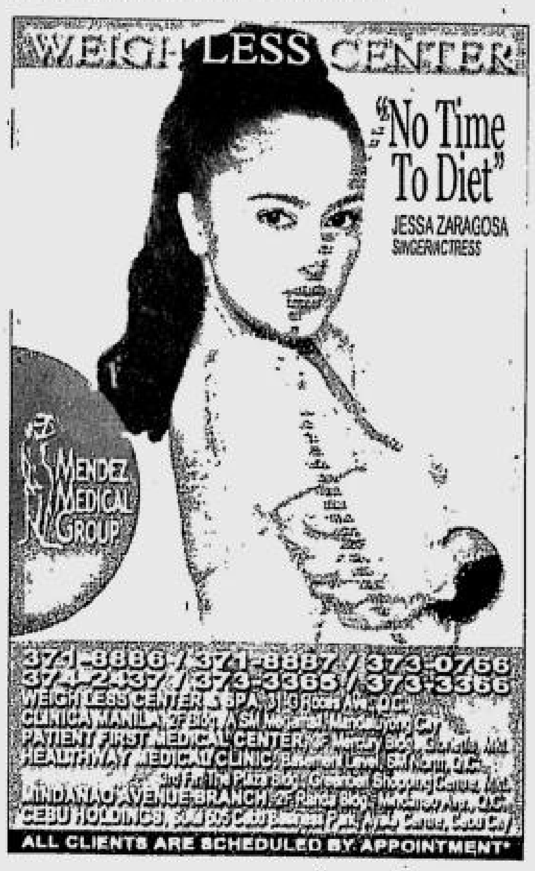

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Overweight? Count on 10-20-30 regimen

10-20-30
10-20-30
ROCKWELL

OBESITY and overweight problems afflict type A people who are classified as high achievers in their fields of business such as CEOs, entrepreneurs and professionals.

Generally, people gain weight as a result of an imbalance between the food intake and the amount of energy spent through physical activity. But the irony about being overweight is that, oftentimes, it goes unnoticed.

According to Dr. Adolfo Bellosillo, president of the Philippine Heart Association from 1990-1991 and currently a top cardiologist at the Makati Medical Center, most people do not know when they actually need to lose weight to stay healthy.

A scientific way to know if one is overweight is by measuring the Body Mass Index (BMI) by computing the body weight in kg divided by the height in meters, raised to the second power. The normal range of BMI is between 18.5-24.9. Overweight people would have a BMI range of 25.0-29.9 while the BMI for obesity is >30.0. These figures would be a good indicator of risk of obesity comorbidities such as cardiovascular disease.

Many experts agree that there are people who, despite excessive diet and exercise, can't seem to lose weight. This is where health problems sets in. According to Bellosillo, who is also an active president of the Foundation for Lay Education on Heart Diseases, genetics play a role in determining body weight.

"If one or both parents are overweight, the risk of being one is higher since genes largely determine our body size and shape," he says. "Adding to that, diets which constitute fried foods like hot dogs, french fries, chips and rich ice cream are delicious and cheap but are fattening. Coupled with a sedentary life like spending a lot of time sitting in the office or at a sofa at home further increases the chances of gaining weight."

The causes of obesity are complex. The problem is that many people take drugs or use treatments to lose weight only to discover that they don't work. Because of the problems faced by people with weight problems, Abbott Laboratories has developed a realistic weight loss and weight-control program that is now a popular regimen in the United States and Europe. Called the "10-20-30 weight loss and weight control regimen," this program advocates that individuals be well-informed about their health and to take charge of their body.

No to fat

Taking charge of your body means saying "no" to fatty and oily foods and sometimes sumptuous buffets, too. Eating 20 percent less of regular food intake is what the program requires to achieve gradual weight loss. Taking time to find a 30-minute form of exercise that will bring enjoyment while losing those extra pounds such as ballroom dancing and similar activities are likewise encouraged in the program because of the belief that finding pleasure in things you do can be sustained and bring better results.

DR. Adolfo Bellosillo

For people who have tried all types of diet, exercise and other weight-reducing treatments but have failed to be any close to their dream figure, the "10-20-30 regimen" offers a reducing agent called Sibutramine (Reductil), known as Meridien in the United States. This treatment stimulates satiety or the feeling of fullness to help the person reduce food intake by at least 20 percent. Over a period of three months or more, weight loss of about by 5 kg per month can be achieved.

According to Bellosillo, Sibutramine works on the neurotransmitters of the brain and sends signals to the hypothalamus, which regulates cravings and appetite to produce a feeling of fullness with little food intake. This is proven by clinical studies done where overweight patients who took Sibutramine have lost about 5 kg per month. After three months of treatment, studies have also concluded that the weight loss is sustained even without medication for at least one year. The study also noted that none of the patients who took the drug for two years suffered from serious side effects.

Which goes back to the basics that obesity is a modifiable condition and can be treated with the cooperation of the patient. Bellosillo explained that the "10-20-30 regimen" is beneficial for early treatment of obesity when the individual has no serious health condition. "For persons with heart problems, diabetes or hypertension, the weight-loss regimen will be more effective under the supervision of a doctor," he stressed.

He added that "people have to be educated on the causes of obesity and be willing to make those lifestyle changes," like eating in small amounts but frequently, and adding fiber-rich foods and vegetables.

Exercise plays a major role in this weight-reduction program. Bellosillo advises that the activity must be able to increase heart rate to the desired level and sustained until after the first 20 minutes, like ballroom dancing and brisk walking.

WORKING Committee of DAW 2001 Run Sportsfest, from right, Fr. Robert Reyes, Marie Ui, Carol Ui and Pia Reyes

Weeklong celebration spreads awareness of hearing disability

ALL roads led to Quezon City Memorial Circle as the Federation of Agencies for the Deaf (FAD) with this year's host agency, Bible Institute for the Deaf , celebrated the opening of the Deaf Awareness Week (Nov. 11-17).

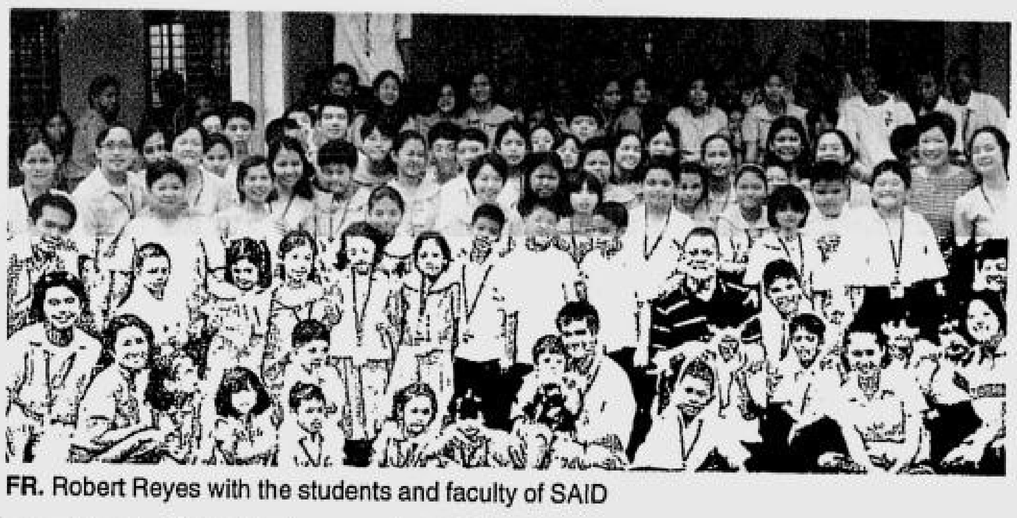
Different member agencies for the deaf coming from marked entry points: Commonwealth Avenue (Southeast Asian Institute for the Deaf, Catholic Ministry to Deaf People and St. Augustine School for the Deaf); North Avenue (Wesleyan University, Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija, Bible Institute for the Deaf and DCS-Valenzuela); Quezon Avenue (Philippine School for the Deaf, Philippine Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Philippine Institute for the Deaf and DCS-Manila); and East Avenue (Philippine Association for the Deaf, DPAD-Mandaluyong, Registry of Interpreters for Deaf Empowerment, DCS-Makati and DCS-Parañaque) converged at the Peace Bell in Quezon City Memorial Circle for a prayer service.

Fr. Roberto P. Reyes, the running priest who has been actively involved with the deaf and has been officiating a signed mass at the UP Parish of the Holy Sacrifice at 9 a.m. every Sunday, led the prayers. He also frontlined a run of deaf and hearing individuals which was followed by a motorcade to Miriam College.

A sportsfest chaired by Carol Ui, SAID executive director and principal, assisted by Pia Reyes, SAID guidance counselor, and Allan Susarno, SAID faculty, took place between the nonhearing and hearing alike at Miriam College after the ecumenical service and opening ceremony organized by the Catholic Ministry to Deaf People and the Bible Institute for the Deaf, respectively.

The theme of this year's celebration is "The Deaf Can." The FAD, which consists of 21 member agencies throughout Metro Manila, advocates for dignity, education, accessibility and full participation; hence, the acronym DEAF. The weeklong celebration had featured, besides the run/sportsfest organized by the Southeast Asian Institute for the Deaf, a symposium organized by the Philippine School for the Deaf; and a cultural presentation organized by the Registry of Interpreters for Deaf Empowerment and St. Francis K-6 School. School-based activities and hearing tests were conducted throughout the week.

This year as in the past, the DAW's major sponsors included Mr. Lee and Rough Rider Jeans. As part of the company's apostolate and outreach program, it has hired deaf employees since 1999. They now have four deaf employees.



FR. Robert Reyes with the students and faculty of SAID

Antihistamine doesn't interfere with lifestyle

A NEW and nonsedating antihistamine, fexofenadine Telfast, doesn't interfere with the lifestyle of individuals compared to earlier drugs. This was revealed in a lecture conducted by Prof. Ian Hindmarch, M.D., during the launching of fexofenadine Telfast, which was attended by an audience composed of more than 650 allergists, EENT specialists, internal medicine-pulmonogists and family medicine/general practitioners from all over the country.

Dr. Hindmarch, head of HPRU Medical Research Center of the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom, said that Telfast doesn't alter an individual patient's level of alertness and directly or indirectly impair cognitive and psychomotor performance.

The lecture highlighted the sedative effects of antihistamines and emphasized the need for third-generation drugs like fexofenadine Telfast in the effective treatment of allergic conditions, including seasonal and perennial rhinitis, urticaria and dermatological cases that led to the development of drugs with potent antihistamine activity.

US records show that 3 percent of patients involved in fatal road accidents had previously taken antihistamines and later found guilty in 72 percent of cases decided in court compared with 86 percent in accident victims using alcohol.

Furthermore, the impact of sedation caused by antihistamines on the safe performance of daily activities is an important aspect when deciding which antihistamine should be prescribed to ambulant patients with allergies and dermatological conditions, according to Dr. Hindmarch.

Sedation refers to the effects of antihistamines on cognition, memory, psychomotor function and information processing—tasks which form the basis of all human activities and functions at home, on the road or at work or, in short, in an individual's lifestyle.

Fexofenadine Telfast is, therefore, expected to offer the therapeutic efficacy of the first- and second-generation drugs with improved pharmacokinetics, and metabolism that avoids the side effects associated with the parent compound and other metabolics.

Aventis is the result of the merger of the pharmaceutical and agricultural businesses of Rhone Poulenc and Hoechst. Aventis Pharma's products prevent and treat serious diseases in the fields of cardiovascular medicine, cancer, allergies, asthma, diabetes, infections, arthritis and other important areas, aside from being involved in health care activities worldwide.

BURST OF FRESHNESS

The Listerine staff recently visited St. Paul College Manila to give away hundreds of Listerine FreshBurst samples to students. The latest Listerine variant to hit the market, Freshburst is an oral antiseptic with an exciting new taste that kills the cause of bad breath and gum disease. The Listerine group will continue to visit other schools, malls and media offices. Listerine FershBurst is developed and manufactured by Pfizer.

LIGHT AND HEALTHY

A FAT FREE FOOD
CHICKEN BROTH
A FAT FREE FOOD
BEEF BROTH

There is one weight-control food plan that is easy to follow and live with. Weight Watchers has developed a breakthrough diet plan that combines fat, fiber and calories in flavorful meals, like the Weight Watchers Chicken or Beef Broth, available at Healthy Options.

Take Charge Doc!
Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA every Tuesday.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

I have been a MEDICard member for sometime now, and have been availing services from hospitals within my area. Just recently however, I transferred residence. How do I get about knowing the accredited providers in my new locality?

For the roster of MEDICard's accredited healthcare providers, you may refer to the list of accredited hospitals and dentists that we provided you. You may also get in touch with us at 819-3471 to 73 or at 893-3543 and ask assistance from our call center officers. If you have Internet access, you may visit our website at www.medicardphils.com and click on the Medical Service Providers icon for easier reference.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Gerry S. Caburnay is MEDICard's accredited surgeon at St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC). Dr. Caburnay is a Medicine graduate from FEU-NRMF with residency training in General Surgery at SLMC. Doc Gerry is an active member of the Philippine College of Surgeons and the Philippine Society of Surgery. He is a biking and basketball fan and frequently takes time out from work to enjoy the sports. He is married to Arabelle Caburnay, also a physician and is blessed with one daughter. You may visit Dr. Gerry for your consultation needs at room 108 of SLMC, from Mondays to Saturdays, 10 AM to 6 PM.

MEDICard accredited specialist Dr. Agustin L. Ceniza, fondly called Dr. Magoo by his patients, is a Medicine graduate from the De La Salle University in Dasmariñas, Cavite. He both took his residency training in Internal Medicine and his subspecialization training in Gastroenterology at the Makati Medical Center. Doc Agustin is married to businesswoman Nova Ceniza and has been blessed with four wonderful daughters. You may visit him for consultation at the Las Piñas Doctors Hospital, room 312 every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 AM to 12 noon and on the same days at room 205 of Medical Center Muntinlupa, from 3 to 6 in the evening.

With over 20 years of clinical practice in her field, MEDICard is proud to have Dr. Thelma T. Atillo as a member of its medical service team rendering quality healthcare service to its members. Dr. Atillo earned her degree in Medicine from the Cebu (Velez) Institute of Medicine, after which she pursued further training and specialized in Family Medicine subspecializing in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Doc Thelma is a proud member of the Cebu Medical Society, Philippine Medical Association and the Philippine Association of Family Physicians. During her free time, she is fond of movie watching, ballroom dancing and reading. For your needed medical care, drop by her clinic at room 202 of the Doctors Specialty Reactive Medical and Diagnostic Center, from Mondays to Fridays, 10 AM to 12 noon and then again from 3 to 5 in the afternoon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com.

For individual or family membership inquiries, please call 818-2161 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. For group or corporate membership, please call 817-5136, 817-4985 or 817-5127 and look for a membership consultant.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com

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ISO 9002

SLMC offers vision rehab; IPM anniversary and geriatric convention slated

IN THE PHILIPPINES, 1.4 million individuals have low vision. Low vision is a significant reduction of visual function not adequately correctable by standard glasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery.

Vision loss ranks third behind arthritis and heart disease among the chronic ailments that need assistance in activities of daily living among the 70s age group. As the population ages, the number of low-vision patients is expected to grow. Individuals affected with low vision experience physical, economic and psychological changes that reduce the quality of life.

St. Luke's Medical Center has established a center, which is the first to offer a completely integrated and synchronized program for the rehabilitation of visually handicapped persons. St. Luke's Vision Rehabilitation Center, under the Institute of Ophthalmology and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, makes available low-vision services for people with incurable reduction of vision.

The Center uses new approaches to vision rehabilitation that teach patients to maximize the use of their remaining vision and give them practical applications for the activities of daily living. These services do not cure the cause of the vision problem.

The devices that can help them read, write and manage the tasks of daily life include adjustable lighting, prescription reading glasses with high-powered lenses, telescopes and telescopic spectacles, large-print publications, reading prisms, magnifying devices, closed-circuit televisions, cassette recorders, electronic reading machines, and computers with large print and speech output systems.

Many people think low vision is a natural part of aging. A person who has vision difficulties should immediately see an eye specialist for an examination. If a person's vision cannot be treated by conventional methods, such as glasses, contact lenses, medication or surgery, vision rehabilitation should be considered the proper intervention. Call 723-0301 local 5422.

Anniversary

ST. Luke's Institute of Pulmonary Medicine is celebrating its 14th anniversary until Nov. 16. The celebration includes activities such as lay forum, inter-hospital case presentation and a quiz contest. A highlight of the weeklong celebration is the Institute's fifth postgraduate course dubbed "Emerging Options in the Diagnosis and Management of Pulmonary Diseases" on Nov. 14-15, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at the St. Luke's 2/F Conference Room. Call 727-5421/5541.

Convention

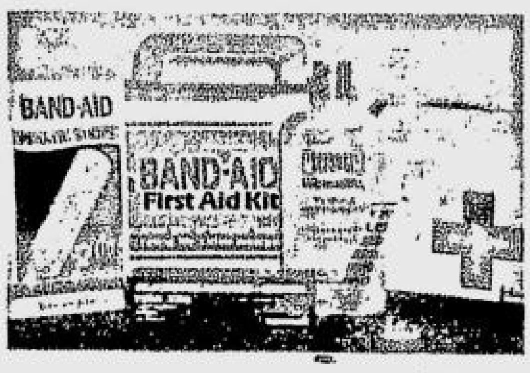
THE PHILIPPINE Society of Geriatric Medicine, with St. Luke's Geriatric Center and UP-PGH's Committee on Aging and Degenerative Diseases, will hold an annual convention dubbed "Geriatric Medicine and the Specialist: Integration and Interdisciplinary Approach," on Nov. 15-17, at the Grand Ballroom of the Manila Midtown Hotel.

Call 723-0301 local 4119/7163.

Rainy day health tips

HERE are some healthful and helpful tips on personal hygiene and sanitation that should come in handy during the rainy season:

- Keep a bottle of Band-Aid alcohol within reach anytime, anywhere—the car, bathroom, kitchen, your bag. It allows instant cleaning and disinfecting of our hands, especially when soap and water are not around or when available water seems dirty and contaminated.
- As kids are wont to get hungry more often on rainy days and as traffic is much worse at this time, have some bread or crackers handy when you pick them, or stop for some drive-through hot food. Always remember to clean and disinfect their hands with alcohol before they dig into the food.
- Bring rubber boots or slippers during the rainy season so as not to wet your shoes in the floodwaters. In the event they do get wet, dry them with a clean cloth and stuff them up with old crumpled newspaper. Leave them to dry in the open air. Spray with disinfectant and apply some shoewax before wearing them again.
- After wading through a flooded area, always wash your feet and legs thoroughly with soap and water when you get home. Then rub alcohol to the areas that got wet in floodwaters, especially between the toes, to kill remaining germs. For those in transit after walking through the dirty water, apply alcohol on your legs and wipe with a clean towel before putting on your shoes.
- And, of course, since more diseases are transmitted by hand, wash hands thoroughly whenever possible and disinfect them with alcohol.
- Clean and air your home after a long rainy period. Sanitize your rooms to keep it free from mildew and germ. Leave clothes and shoe cabinets open to rid them of moisture. Inspect your yard for accumulated rainwater, which can serve as breeding ground for mosquitoes.



Bilis patak, Bilis patay ang SKIN FUNGI sa presyong patak-patak.

New Tioconazole Trosyd Lotion

Hindi kasing mahal ng ibang 5 gram antifungal creams. Konting patak lang, bilis patay ang an-an, buni, athlete's foot at had-had. At dahil lotion, it spreads easily and vanishes quickly. With the same potent formula that's also available in cream.

Bilis-patak. Bilis-patay.

If syptoms persist, consult your physician.

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Fix your hair

WHEN Bench does something, it is always with a big bang. The opening of the apparel and lifestyle giant's newest enterprise is no different.

Fix Bench Salon, Bench's current hottest offering to its fashionable patrons is a trendy and hip salon where the art of making you look gorgeous is a breeze. This should not come as a surprise, really, since the salon's resident creative learning directors are two of the country's top names in the hair and makeup styling industry—Alex Carbonell and Juan Sarte III.

And though these glam duo prepped the salon staff to give the best beauty service that will ever be known this side of the Pacific, the training did not stop there.

Four lucky hairstylists, all senior stylists personally picked by Carbonell, were sent to Singapore to train at the prestigious London-based Toni & Guy Academy.

"These senior stylists will in turn train a new batch who will then train the succeeding batch and so forth," says Carbonell. "The idea is to share with them the skills, the flair, the good taste of salon artists and professionals who deal with the rich and famous and the more discriminating set."

Fix Bench Salon manager Bryan Lim, who is also the present product manager of PCX, adds, "We are investing in our trainees. We want to see them grow as artists."

Lim stresses that Fix Bench Salon is setting an industry trend as it is the first to do further training of a salon crew before they even touch anyone's hair or face. The philosophy behind this? "To train our people first with leading salon practitioners and professionals who have the credentials, the experience and more importantly, the artistry and taste to conduct the training."

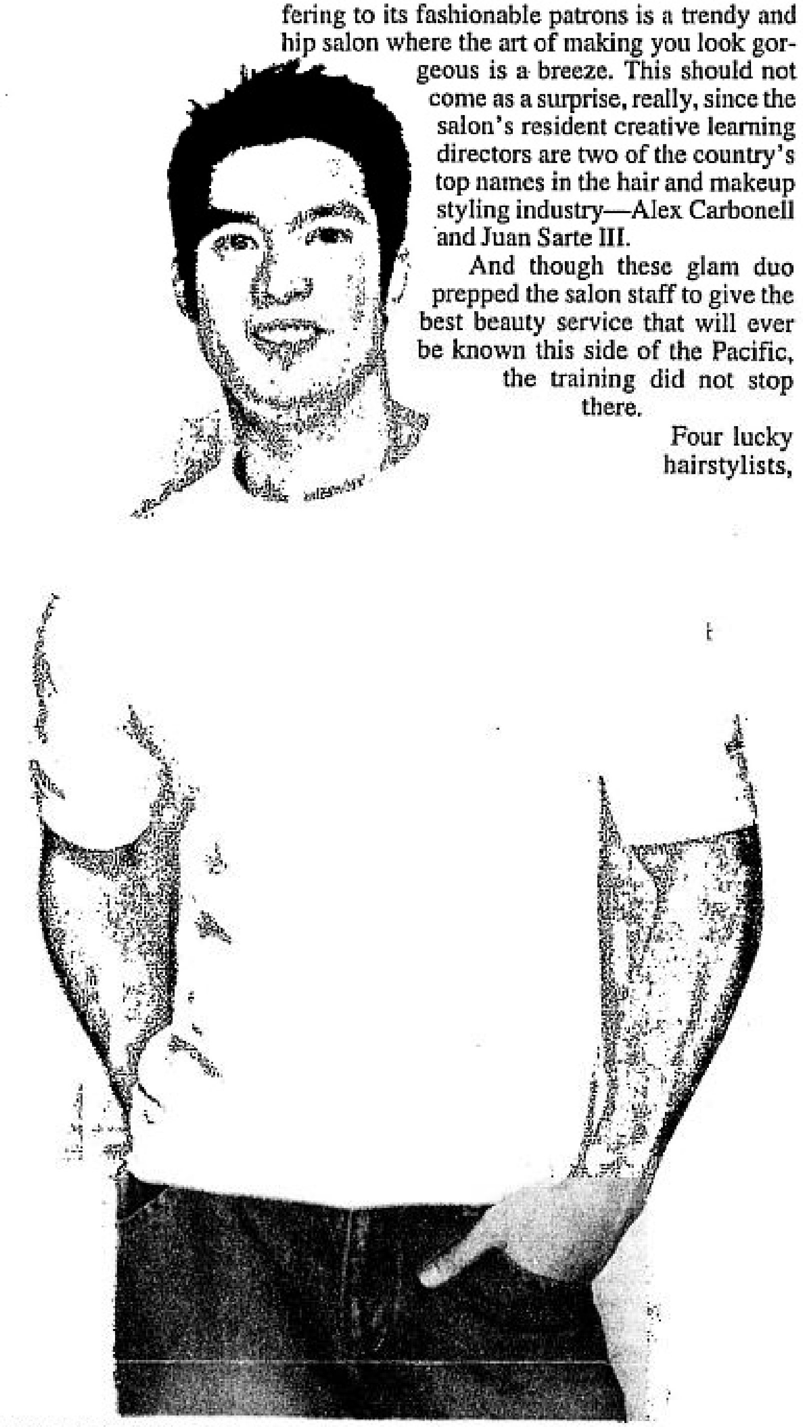
Incidentally, Fix Bench Salon did not only send some of its promising staff to Singapore, it actually flew in one of New Zealand's world-renowned hair designers, Philip Ellis, to the country to give the entire staff a hair designing and coloring workshop. With his expertise and vast knowledge in the field of hair design, Ellis proved to be a valuable mentor to the Fix staff.

Other Fix Bench Salon branches will open soon at Glorietta IV Cinema Level, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Metroeast, Robinsons Starmall Pampanga and The Podium Ortigas.

THE CHERYL CUT. Rough-dry with your fingers using Fix hair gel and create a variety of styles.

THE JET CUT. Inspired by the '70s hairstyle, this hip haircut allows freedom of movement.

THE KAT CUT. The bob has been given a new twist by layering sections using a razor.


THE DIETHER CUT. This "mohawk" haircut has short sides and longer layers at the crown enough to create height and uneven texture.

AT THE TONI & Guy Training Center in Singapore: Mon Allon, Rene Lopez, Gilbert Yago, Kristine Lim, Benjamin Uy, Leo Avellana and Alex Carbonell

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Origins of a relaxing bath

(From page C1)

They have handmade soaps, body massage oils, bath oils, essential burner oils, herbal soaps and other fresh products from nature. All soaps are handmade, hand-cut and hand-wrapped with the utmost care. "Our essential oils all come from the different parts of the plant including the flowers, leaves, twigs, branches, seeds and fruits," Rose says. The oils are blended at room temperature, bottled and then sealed with wax. "These oils not only give desirable moods but also moisturize the skin to give it a silky, satin finish," she stresses. The oils are believed to promote calmness, emotional and hormonal balance, stress relief and rejuvenation.

LATHER yourself with these soaps.

BLISSFUL GIFTS. Burner with essential oils

It is important that the essential oils are of a good quality and used in appropriate amounts. "You cannot scrimp on oil because this scent is conveyed by the olfactory nerve to areas of the brain. This is what influences emotions and hormonal response," Rose explains. When used in a bath or in massage, the oils are absorbed through the skin and carried by body fluids to the main body systems like the nervous and muscular systems for a healing effect.

Rose says that the best way to benefit from aromatherapy is by breathing the aromatic vapors using a diffuser or burner or by absorbing diluted oils through the skin in a bath or a massage. Thus, the perfect regimen would be to use a natural soap and then to soak yourself in a bath sprinkled with some bath oil; or if you don't have the time, Rose suggests dabbing some bath oil on yourself before toweling off. Then, light a burner and drift off to dreamland surrounded by the scent of lavender or vanilla. Sounds like sheer heaven.

Two kinds of soaps

Bath Origins carries two kinds of soap lines—All Natural and Flower Herb Collection. The All Natural line reads like a menu and some of the selections are good enough to eat—Cucumber and Milk is a cool and refreshing bar of cucumber juices, pulp and mint oils. It is often used to lighten dark areas around the face and eye area; Honey Bee Good is made of honey bee's wax that is excellent for smoothing the skin and softening lines.

Lime Lemon Zest, rich in vitamin C, is good for its bleaching properties. With grated lemon peel it is also a natural antioxidant for the skin. Seaweed is a bar infused with seaweed extract to help trim down fatty areas in the body. Lathering for two to three minutes helps do the trick. The Flower and Herb line has Tea Tree to help blemished or irritated skin; Lavender and Chamomile to act as a mild astringent to help and clear the skin; Spearmint to perk up your mornings and help relieve cough, cold and muscle aches and many other bars to cleanse and care for the skin at the same time delighting the senses.

Rose says that aromatherapy burner oils are a must for anyone wanting some stress free relaxing moments. Cinnamon is emotionally stimulating and energizing while Sandalwood relaxes the mind. Orange and Spice stimulates the mind and smells yummy. Patchouli allays anxiety and depression while Ylang Ylang creates a sense of euphoria as it relaxes.

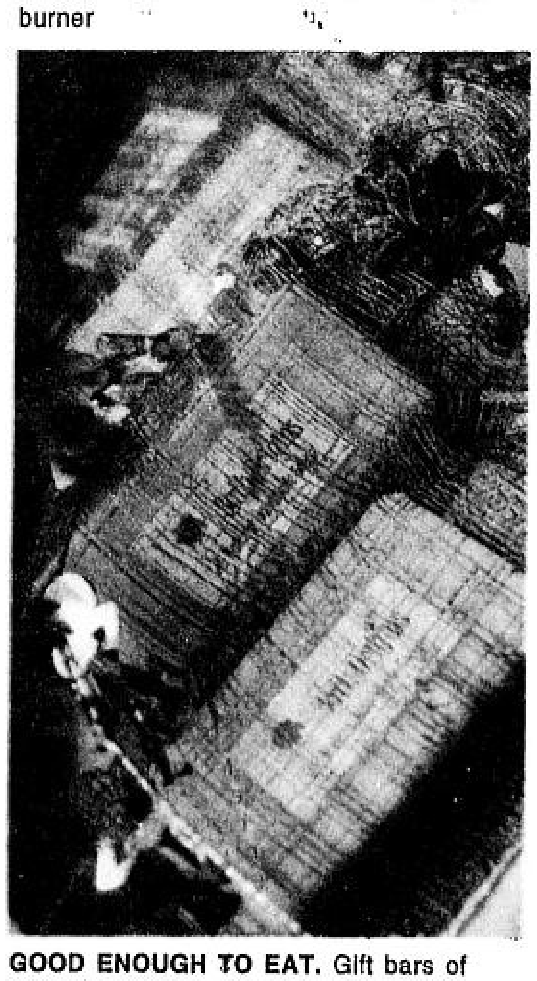
"The sense of smell is the most powerful sense you have. A single whiff can evoke feelings and memories long-forgotten," Rose says.

With this business that has been a blessing to the Manzano couple and to many others who use their products, we can only say amen to that.

E-mail the author at
cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

Bath Origins
A WHIFF OF HEAVEN. Various oils and burner

CLEOPATRA would have loved this: Bath Origins' aromatherapy line


GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT. Gift bars of natural soap

Common questions men ask about exercise

Part Two

Can you shower right after workout? How often should you lift weights? Is air-conditioning a no-no when exercising? Will weight-lifting affect golf performance? For answers to these and other questions, read on

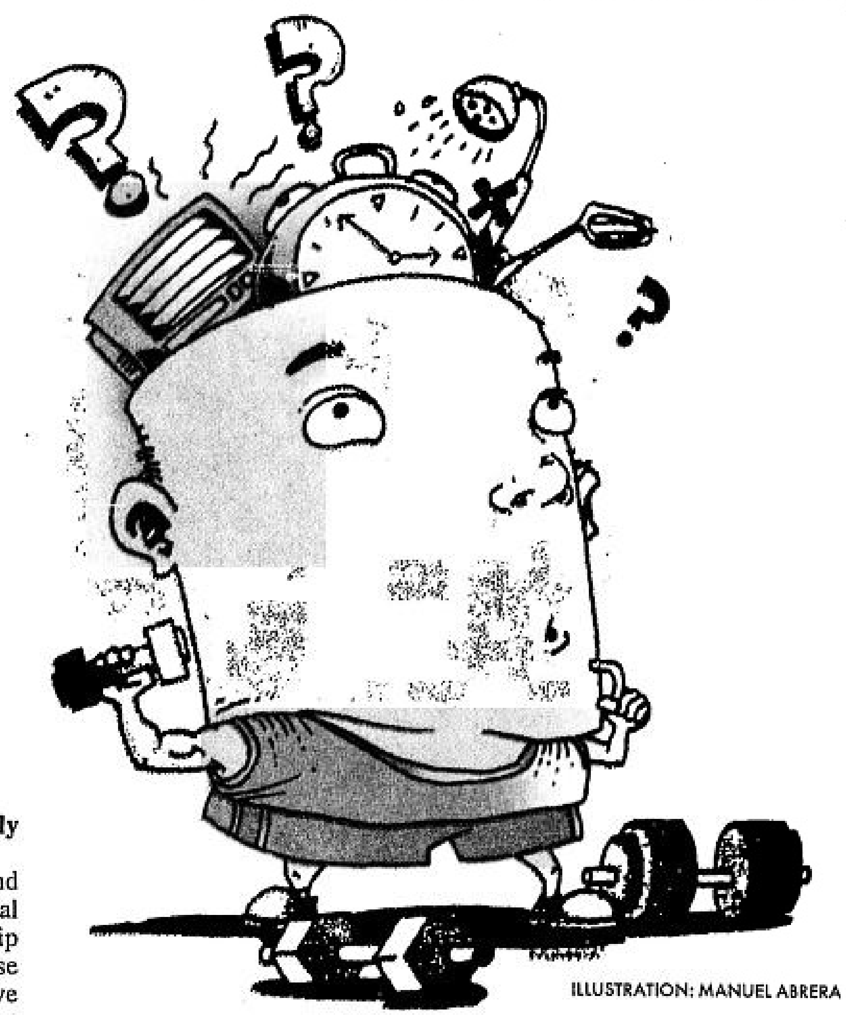


ILLUSTRATION: MANUEL ABRERA

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

KINDLY enlighten me about taking showers after a game or a workout. You hear so many things like getting *pasma* or don't shower first until you are completely rested or just "bathe" with alcohol so you won't smell. Is there a general rule? I normally go the gym during my lunch break and I don't think it would be a good idea to go back to my office without showering first.

I've talked to several doctors about this topic. Here are their conclusions: Whether you are going to shower immediately after exercise or not, you should always cool-down after working out. Your heart rate should return to near normal resting levels (100 beats per minute or less). This takes approximately five to 10 minutes. Use lukewarm water instead of very hot or very cold water. Water that is very hot further dilates already dilated blood vessels near the skin. This may cause a person to get a little dizzy. Very cold water, on the other hand, constricts the blood vessels and may cause a temporary tremor or cramp, according to Dr. George Canlas, sports medicine specialist of St. Luke's Hospital and Sprain & Strain Clinic. Therefore, I think it is perfectly safe to take a shower right after exercising provided your heart rate has returned to normal and you use lukewarm water. It's probably more unsafe (in terms of your social life) to return to your office without taking a bath! Another thought on the matter is that if this *pasma* thing were true, swimming would be very dangerous. Imagine, exercising while being surrounded by water!

Which do you think is better, lifting weights three times a week every other day for the whole body or splitting it up for five days—three days for the upper body and two days for the lower part?

Three times a week for the whole body is fine if you don't want to exercise every day and you don't have that many exercises or sets to do. On the other hand, a "split routine" is better if you don't want to spend that much time in the gym but you don't mind going every day. This type of routine is also necessary if you are doing a large volume of weights—many exercises, sets and repetitions. Otherwise, you could spend half your life in the gym.

Can you give me some tips about exercising in an air-conditioned gym? Some of my co-office workers don't want to use the air conditioner and prefer the fan or nothing at all. I cannot explain to them clearly that exercising with an air-conditioner is not bad for them.

Many people think that it is bad to workout in an air-conditioned room. This is usually due to ignorance. Some people think that because they don't sweat as much in the air-conditioned room and that they are not burning enough calories. Others think that because it is cold, they might get sick. The truth is that in a cool and dry environment, the body doesn't have to sweat so much because the cool air can easily deal with the internal body heat created by exercise. Exercising in a hot and humid environment may cause you to sweat more but it doesn't automatically mean you are burning more calories. In fact, most people will burn fewer calories because the heat makes them feel exhausted faster. The cooler you are, the more energy you have to work out. People who exercise in a cool environment usually find that the workout exhilarates them instead of exhausting them. They can work out for longer periods before they get tired. The result? More calories burned. To counteract the "chilling" effect you may feel after exercising in an air-conditioned gym, change your wet clothes for dry ones and put a jacket on.

Will weight-lifting affect my performance in golf?

Yes, it will affect your performance—for the better. Greg Norman, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods all work out with weights. Not the way a body builder works out with weights but a program to build strength without bulk. According to Wayne Westcott, Research Fitness Director of the YMCA, an exercise routine that combines aerobic exercise, weights and stretching results in "longer drives, lower scores, less fatigue and no injuries during the following golf season." In the YMCA studies done on both amateur and professional golfers, strength training plus flexibility training improved club head speed by five miles per hour.

They always say that a good weight-lifting workout should start from the bottom going up, meaning starting from the legs and ending in the arm area. How true is this?

What they mean about a weight-training workout starting from "the bottom going up" is that it is better to start by using the large muscles of the body (legs, chest, back) before the smaller muscles (shoulders, arms, wrists). The small muscles assist the large ones (for example, the triceps assist the chest in a bench press), therefore, if you exercise the small ones first, they will already be fatigued by the time they have to do their job as assistants when you use the large muscles. You may not be able to lift the weight properly in a bench press not because your chest muscles are tired but because your triceps cannot help the chest muscles anymore. The large muscles also require more energy compared to the smaller ones so it makes sense to exercise them early in the workout when you are still fresh and not so tired.

Is it really that important to warm up, cool down and stretch? I only have so much time to work out.

Warming up, cooling down and stretching after the workout are vital to avoid injuries. Many people skip these components of an exercise session because they want to save time and because they think it's not that important. The advice of fitness experts all over the world? Don't!

The low intensity movements of the warm-up and cool-down make sure that there will be a gradual increase and decrease in heart rate and blood pressure. It is dangerous to allow your heart rate and blood pressure to spike sky high when you start exercise and take a drastic nosedive after exercise. This is what can happen if you don't warm up or cool down.

Stretching, meanwhile, keeps your muscles and joints flexible, preventing future injuries. If that doesn't convince you, think about this: New research indicates that stretching helps you become stronger. In one study, those who stretched after lifting weights became 20 percent stronger than those who lifted weights but didn't stretch.

My trainer is always telling me to lift my weights slowly. What can happen if I lift at a fast speed?

Exercise scientists have discovered an inverse relationship between the speed used in lifting a weight and the force generated by the muscle. The higher the speed, the less muscle force is needed. The lower the speed, the harder the muscle has to work. That's basically why your trainer is telling you to lift slowly.

Another important reason to lift slowly is that lifting weights with too much momentum places a lot of stress on the muscles and connective tissues (tendons and ligaments). You see, something has to act as a "brake" when you lower the weight toward the floor and the pull of gravity. Otherwise, the weight will just abruptly drop down on your toes. That "something" is your muscles, tendons and ligaments. Explosive, fast weight lifting can injure not just the specific joint being exercised but also other joints, which start to move to control the momentum. For example, in a standing bicep curl, it is only supposed to be the elbow that moves. With momentum, the shoulder and lower back also start to move.

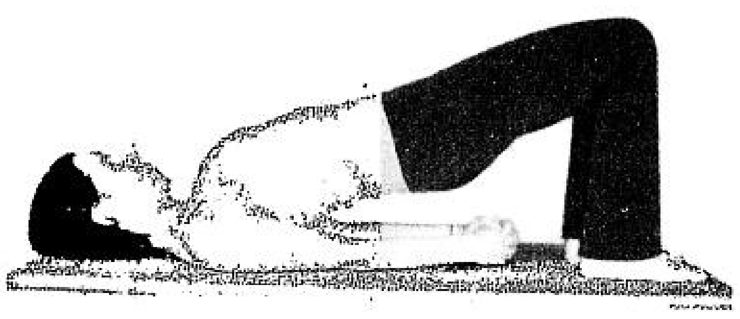
Aside from all that, the amount of weight that is being carried is kind of fake because you would not be able to lift that same amount if you slowed down your movement and let the muscles and not momentum do the work.

* * *

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. (AFPP) will hold the 2001 National Fitness Convention on Nov. 24 and 25 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Ortigas Center, Pasig. International presenters are Lawrence Biscontini ("Group Exercise"), Dr. Mark Slavin ("Personal Training") and John Young ("Fitness Management"). Mr. Biscontini will hold a Fitness Yoga Certification on Nov. 23 and a Resist-a-Ball Certification on Nov. 25 at the Galleria Suites Hotel, Ortigas Center, Pasig. Call 842-0567.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.com for past articles, exercises and questions

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



The bridge

This yoga-inspired exercise strengthens the buttocks and hamstrings (back of the thighs) while stretching the front of the thighs and hips.

Equipment:
Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your back with your hands by the side of your hips and your knees bent with feet slightly apart.
2. Bring your heels as close to your buttocks as you can. Press down on the floor and lift the hips up.
3. Bring your arms under your buttocks. Clasp your hands and move your elbows and shoulder blades closer to each other. This will make your hips push up some more until your chin is almost to your chest.
4. Hold the position for 10-15 seconds.
5. Rest and repeat three more times.

Performance tips:

1. If it bothers your knees, walk your feet away from your buttocks until you find a comfortable position.
2. Make sure to keep on breathing slowly as you hold the position.

WINNERS in the recent Mr. Manhunt Philippines 2001 competition will represent the country in the international competition in Beijing in November. Rick Cayzer, Mr. Manhunt Philippines 2001, (third from left) is flanked by Edgar Caruela, fourth runner-up; Marc Dungo, second runner-up; Raymond Nieva, first runner-up; and Edward Bantegui, third runner-up. Mr. Manhunt Philippines 2001 competition was recently held at the AFP Theater, QC. The competition began in Singapore in 1987 and went international in 1993. The winners are used as models for male-related products.

All out Shopping.

From the sparkle of jewels to the shimmer of silks, from designer labels to street fashion, from hi-tech to hand-made, from fun things to food stuff, Thailand has it all. At prices that no one else has. All you've got to do is make out your list and drop in.

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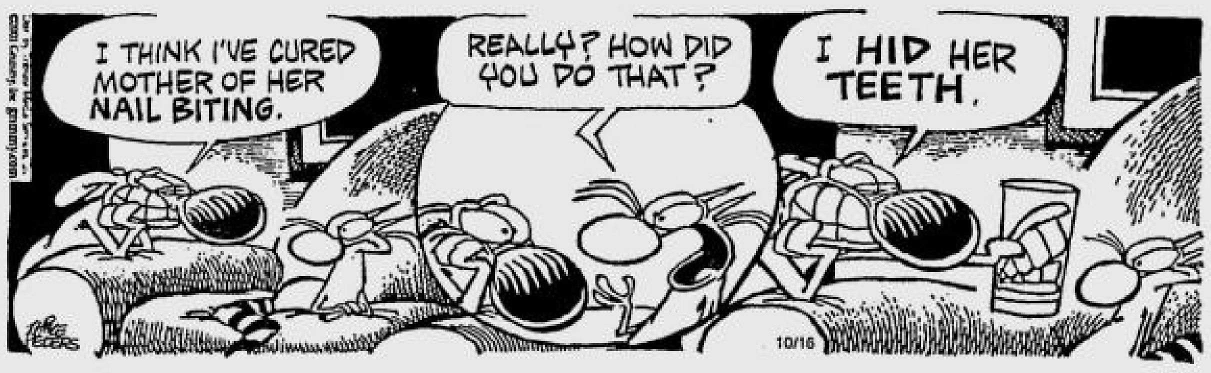
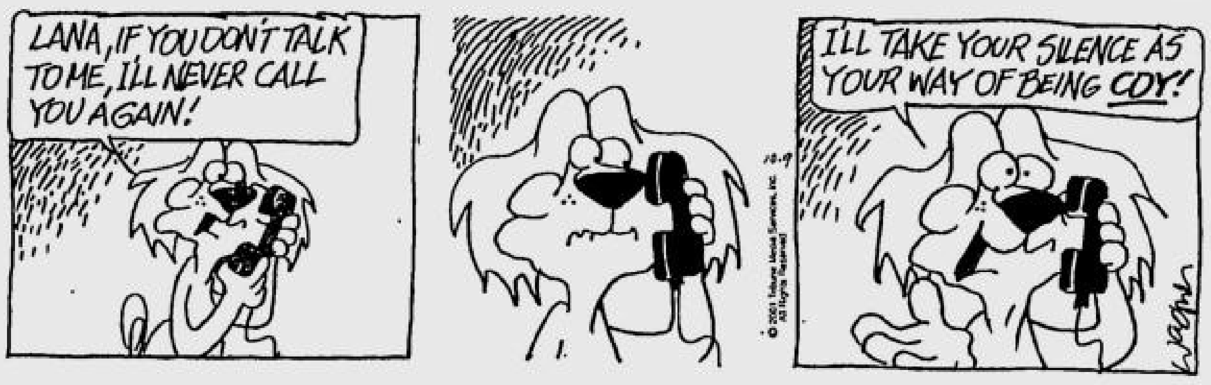
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I THINK I'VE CURED MOTHER OF HER NAIL BITING.
REALLY? HOW DID YOU DO THAT?
I HID HER TEETH.
10/16

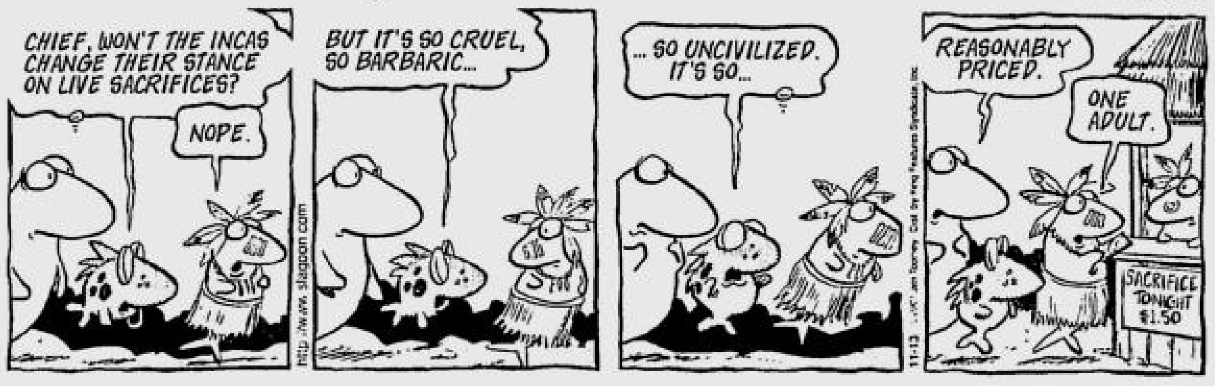
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


LANA, IF YOU DON'T TALK TO ME, I'LL NEVER CALL YOU AGAIN!
I'LL TAKE YOUR SILENCE AS YOUR WAY OF BEING COY!
10-9

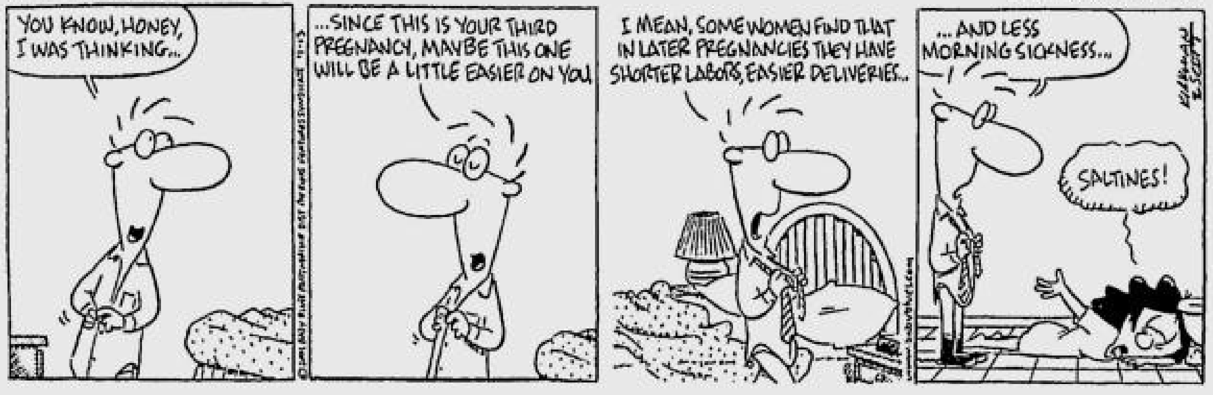
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


CHIEF, WON'T THE INCAS CHANGE THEIR STANCE ON LIVE SACRIFICES?
NOPE.
BUT IT'S SO CRUEL, SO BARBARIC...
... SO UNCIVILIZED. IT'S SO...
REASONABLY PRICED.
ONE ADULT.
SACRIFICE TONIGHT $1.50
11-13

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU KNOW, HONEY, I WAS THINKING...
...SINCE THIS IS YOUR THIRD PREGNANCY, MAYBE THIS ONE WILL BE A LITTLE EASIER ON YOU
I MEAN, SOME WOMEN FIND THAT IN LATER PREGNANCIES THEY HAVE SHORTER LABORS, EASIER DELIVERIES...
...AND LESS MORNING SICKNESS...
SALTINES!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Garry Marshall, Whoopi Goldberg, Joe Mantegna, Vinny Testaverde, Tracy Scoggins

Happy Birthday: The more open you are with others, the better the feedback you receive in return. Love and romance will be a highlight, whether you are in a relationship already or still single and looking for Mr. or Ms Right. Your ability to motivate colleagues will enhance your chance for advancement. Your numbers: 15, 17, 23, 34, 45, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): It's time to put yourself on the line. Don't hesitate to let others view your work or hear about your most recent idea.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You should be considering a trip with your family or lover. You can complete creative projects if you concentrate. If you attend an auction, you can purchase an object that will grow in value.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will avoid interruptions and get more done if you work at home. A co-worker may try to cause friction or drag you into an unsavory situation. Don't get involved in office gossip.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should take time to do what you enjoy most. Get busy making changes to your home. You'll be pleased with the results. Try to assist an elder with worrisome problems.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You will find it difficult to deal with family matters today. A loved one will be hard to get along with. Arguments are likely to lead to physical confrontations.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't count on help from peers. Problems with colleagues may cause setbacks, but don't be upset. Complete what you start. Your professionalism will be noticed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Keep a low profile and work as hard and fast as you can. If you're quick to act on sudden career opportunities, you will strengthen your position.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You'll be inclined to jump to conclusions. Observe carefully before taking action. Make sure you don't make mistakes you'll regret later.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't let anyone get to you. Disagreements will leave you feeling depressed and lonely. Avoid confrontations and keep your opinions to yourself today. Catch up on your reading.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Money matters involving friends or groups may be causing stress. You can contribute your time or knowledge and save yourself some cash.

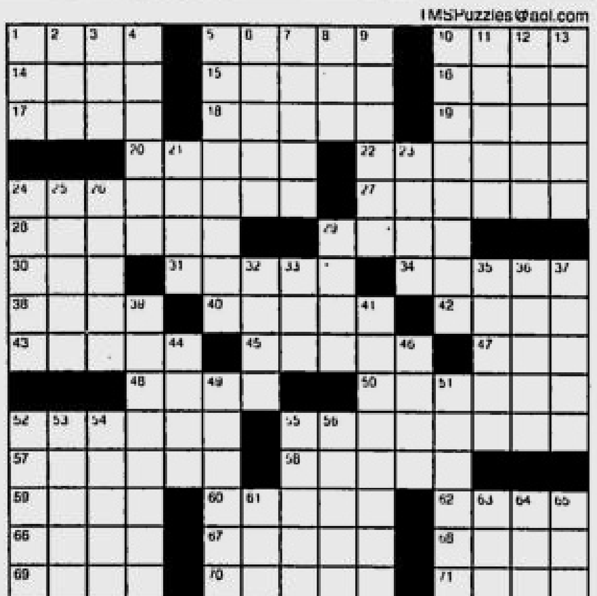
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll feel better if you get out with friends. Romance is present if you're willing to take a chance. If someone interests you, don't hesitate to make the first move.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Lectures or group meetings will convey knowledge that will help you handle your current troubles. Partnerships develop through contacts.

Birthday Baby: You are curious, inquisitive and determined to get to the bottom of anything that interests you. Your strong intuition will help you make the right choices throughout life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Verna Sult
Silver Spring, MD

9/28/01

ACROSS
1 Froth
5 Electronic letters
10 Electronic snooper?
14 Against
15 Large: pref.
16 Very dry
17 Judge
18 Two quartets merged
19 Asset
20 Correct: pref.
22 Tristan's beloved
24 Electronic task?
27 Numbered works
28 Couch denizen
29 Burden
30 Nest-egg $
31 Not with it
34 Aired again
38 Musicians John or J.J.
40 Furniture set
42 Bombay wrap
43 Device used in pix
45 Young lady
47 Dict. entry
48 Doctrines
50 Old-fashioned
52 Pendant ornament
55 Electronic characteristic?
57 Titania's husband
58 Taking to court
59 __ Scotia
60 TLC provider
62 Elliptical
66 Electronic hideaway?
67 Electronic flower?
68 Vex
69 Spanish artist
70 Divisions: abbr.
71 Electronic sch.?

DOWN
1 Fashion of the moment
2 Single bill
3 Ingested
4 Tree that is sensitive to touch
5 Electronic gestures?
6 Exaggerated manliness
7 Respond to
8 Anger
9 Liquid cosmetic
10 Electronic mates?
11 Markets
12 Bluenose
13 Affirmatives
21 Q-V connection
23 Stimulus
24 Electronic photos?
25 Fable's lesson
26 Italian aviator Balbo
29 Elects
32 Buzzes
33 Sundial three
35 Wheel spokes
36 __ we all?
37 Neat-o!
39 Electronic itinerant?
41 Electronic escorts?
44 Capital of Norway
46 Taiwanese currency
49 Fixed
51 Clinton's veep
52 Skeleton
53 Residence
54 Absolutely not!
55 Electronic cessation?
56 Pursuit
61 Lode load
63 Pep
64 Clay, today
65 Permit to

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

N	I	E	C	E	■	B	A	L	K	■	S	W	A	B
A	D	D	A	X	■	E	B	O	N	■	P	O	R	E
G	E	N	R	E	■	F	A	C	E	■	A	L	G	A
S	E	A	R	C	H	O	T	H	E	R	S	F	O	R
■	■	■	■	U	R	G	E	■	■	A	M	E	N	D
O	N	S	E	T	S	■	■	A	L	M	S	■	■	■
P	A	U	L	O	■	A	E	R	O	■	■	O	W	E
T	H	E	I	R	V	I	R	T	U	E	S	T	H	Y
S	A	Y	■	■	I	D	E	S	■	N	O	T	E	R
■	■	■	I	R	M	A	■	■	P	E	Y	O	T	E
A	L	O	N	E	■	■	S	P	A	R	■	■	■	■
S	E	L	F	F	O	R	T	H	Y	V	I	C	E	S
C	O	D	E	■	W	O	O	L	■	A	R	O	M	A
O	N	E	S	■	N	O	N	O	■	T	A	C	I	T
T	E	N	T	■	S	T	Y	X	■	E	N	A	T	E

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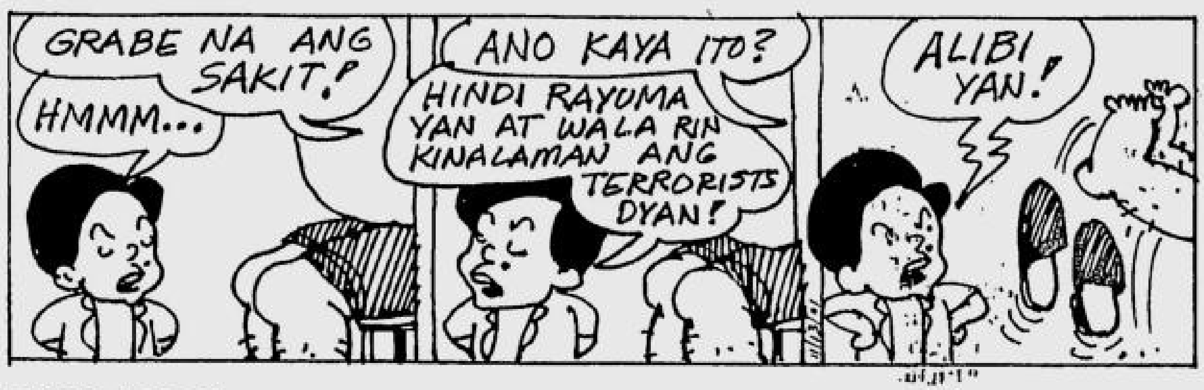
9/28/01

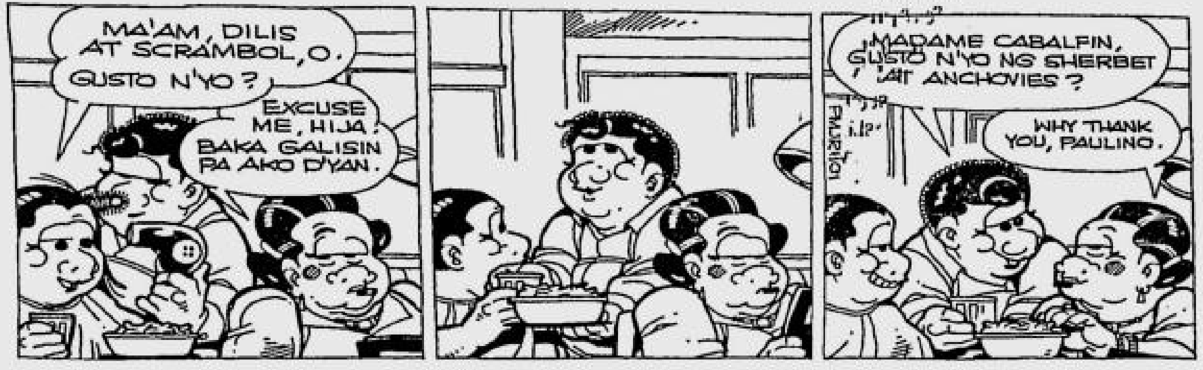
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GRABE NA ANG SAKIT!
HMMM...
ANO KAYA ITO?
HINDI RAYUMA YAN AT WALA RIN KINALAMAN ANG TERRORISTS DYAN!
ALIBI YAN!

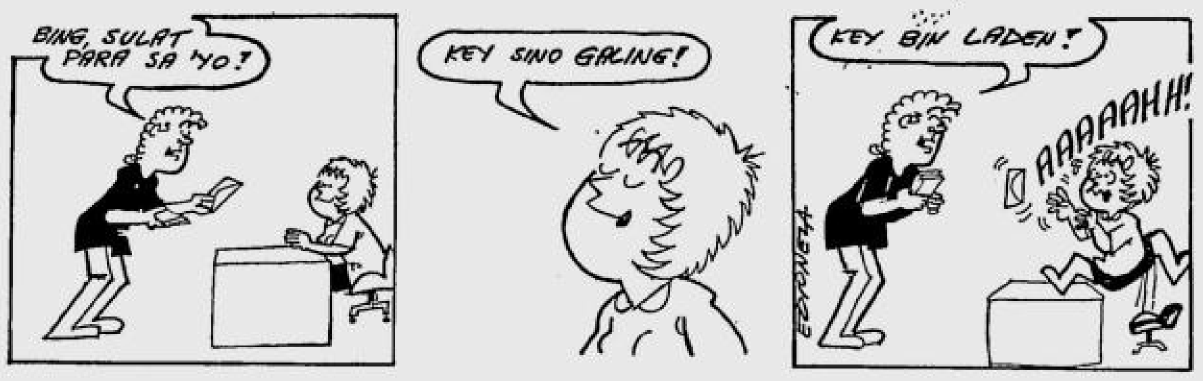
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MA'AM, DILIS AT SCRAMBOL, O. GUSTO N'YO?
EXCUSE ME, HIJA! BAKA GALISIN PA AKO D'YAN.
MADAME CABALFIN, GUSTO N'YO NG SHERBET AT ANCHOVIES?
WHY THANK YOU, PAULINO.

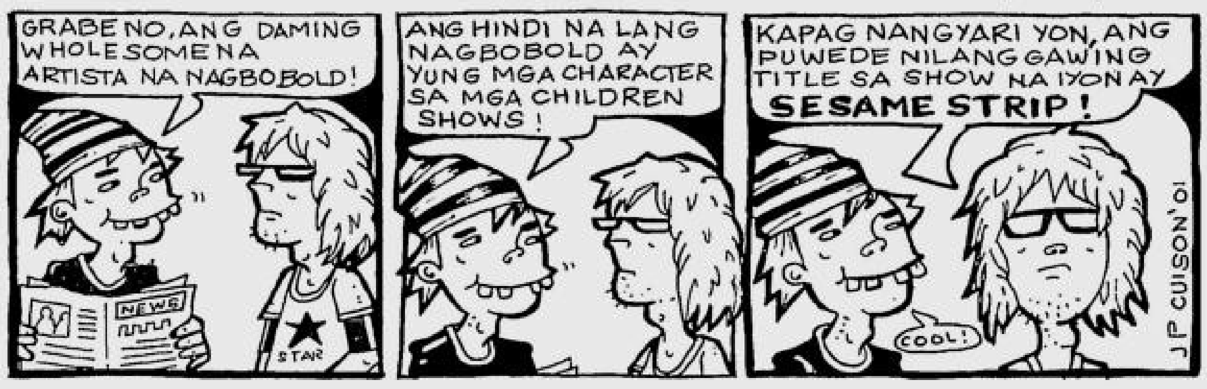
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


BING, SULAT PARA SA 'YO!
KEY SINO GALING!
KEY BIN LADEN!
AAAAAAHH!

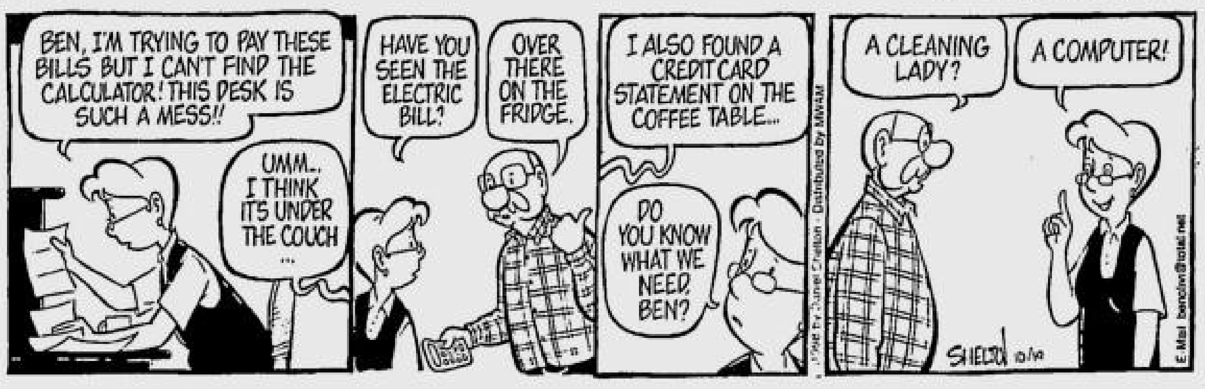
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


GRABE NO, ANG DAMING WHOLESOME NA ARTISTA NA NAGBOBOLD!
NEWS
STAR
ANG HINDI NA LANG NAGBOBOLD AY YUNG MGA CHARACTER SA MGA CHILDREN SHOWS!
KAPAG NANGYARI YON, ANG PUWEDE NILANG GAWING TITLE SA SHOW NA IYON AY SESAME STRIP!
COOL!
JP CUISON '01

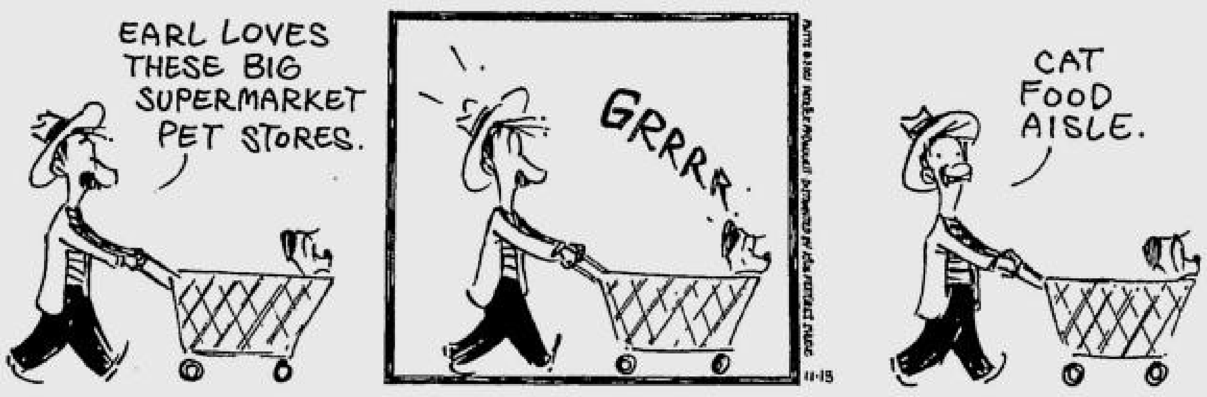
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN, I'M TRYING TO PAY THESE BILLS BUT I CAN'T FIND THE CALCULATOR! THIS DESK IS SUCH A MESS!!
UMM.. I THINK IT'S UNDER THE COUCH ...
HAVE YOU SEEN THE ELECTRIC BILL?
OVER THERE ON THE FRIDGE.
I ALSO FOUND A CREDIT CARD STATEMENT ON THE COFFEE TABLE...
DO YOU KNOW WHAT WE NEED, BEN?
A CLEANING LADY?
A COMPUTER!
SHELTON 10/10

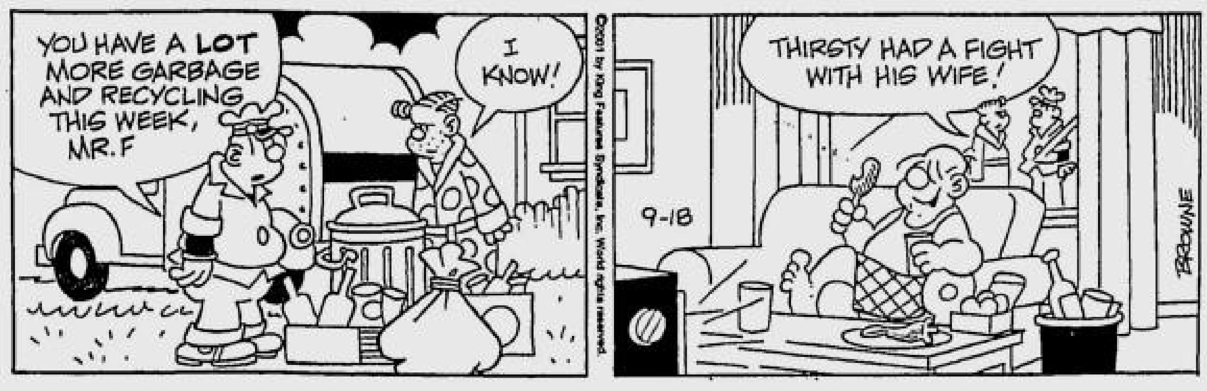
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL LOVES THESE BIG SUPERMARKET PET STORES.
GRRRR.
CAT FOOD AISLE.
11-13

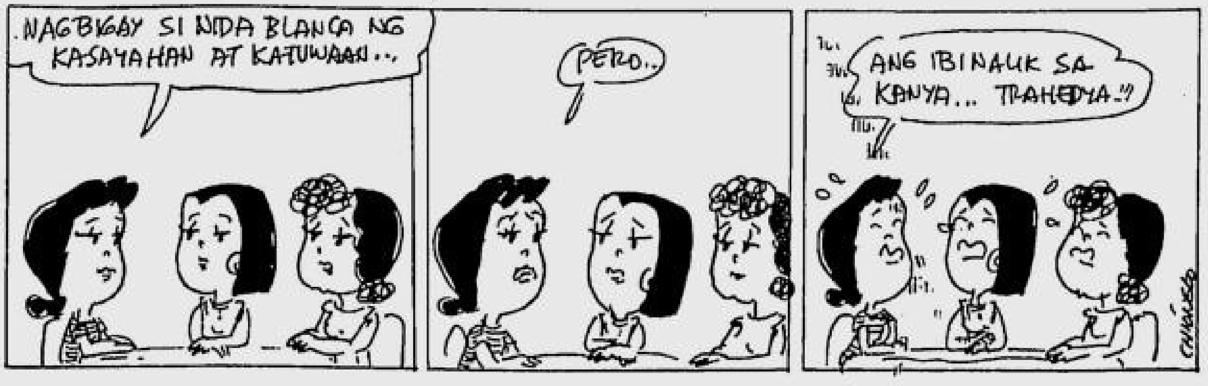
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


YOU HAVE A LOT MORE GARBAGE AND RECYCLING THIS WEEK, MR. F
I KNOW!
THIRSTY HAD A FIGHT WITH HIS WIFE!
9-18
BROWNE

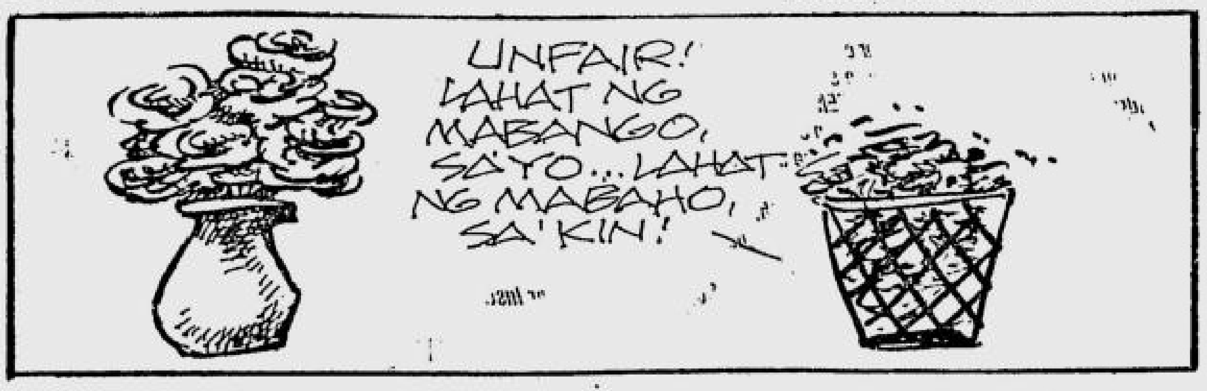
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NAGBIGAY SI NIDA BLANCA NG KASAYAHAN AT KATUWAAN...
PERO..
ANG IBINAUK SA KANYA... TRAHEDYA..!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


UNFAIR! LAHAT NG MABANGO, SA'YO... LAHAT NG MABAHO, SA'KIN!

To each his own true path

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

ROMMEL de Leon of Chicago, USA, sent in the following letter:

I appreciate your efforts in making me [and other people] aware of the esoteric side of life. I'm glad to let you know that I've moved on to a lot of different subjects after reading your books and attending your seminar. Now my search has gone beyond philosophy, religion and even the powers of the mind. I am now indulging myself in the ultimate search—enlightenment. I am currently studying the life of masters, mystics, sages and their methods in attaining self-realization. I've encountered different names, such as Yogananda, Ramana Maharishi, Eckhart, Tolle and other legendary and contemporary masters. I have found comfort and hope in their teachings which are the opposite of the religious dogmas and beliefs I grew up with.

However, I still find myself wary about putting my whole trust in someone. I don't see myself as devoting myself to or following a teacher or to a spiritual figure. I've read a lot of corruption and abuse within spiritual organizations, that's why I still like to search alone. I just pray that God will reveal his essence to me within this lifetime.

Have you done this kind of searching before? Do you know of any authentic teachers in this path? Have you encountered one or experienced a glimpse of it?

I am glad to know I have somehow encouraged you to look at life from a different perspective. For your information, my Sunday evening radio program over dzMM can still be heard worldwide via the Internet.

I am happy to know you have moved on to higher grounds beyond "philosophy, religion and the mind." Too often these have served merely as obstacles to true enlightenment. Note how many are trapped in their own little mental boxes without even realizing they are in a box. The Muslims believe theirs is the only true religion, so do the Christians, Hindus and Jews. And so they have fought one another throughout the centuries to prove who is right.

Some convert themselves from one religion to another in an attempt to find enlightenment, only to realize later on they were merely jumping from one box to mother.

It is true that, like you, I have thought deeply about this question of which path to follow. Like you and many others, I also have fallen briefly into following the "truths" propagated by other spiritual teachers, until I saw the light by myself. I have had one single and brief but momentous experience in cosmic consciousness, where I felt completely and absolutely one with the entire universe. It lasted only for a few seconds, but it was to change my consciousness forever.

You are right in being wary of so-called spiritual teachers or gurus, for they are often as blind as the people they try to lead. After spending so much time in searching for the answer, I have come to the inevitable conclusion that there is no greater guru or teacher than yourself. Each of us must follow the light from within us and not the one given off by others, no matter how "enlightened" or "wise" s/he may be. "The Kingdom of God is within you," remember?

GOD'S KINGDOM
JED

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

The last time a true master appeared on earth, he was crucified. And I have not yet encountered anybody else quite like him. So I cannot tell you who are the authentic teachers in this path.

But which path? There is only one path and this is the path that each is taking. Let us not blindly follow the paths of others, because that is their own. We must discover our own true path by looking within ourselves. That's where all the answers ultimately lie In.

I like the reply that the American psychic and prophet, Edgar Cayce, gave to a similar question when asked which version of the Bible is the best. He said, "The one that you live."

I do not know whether the above thoughts will make sense to every reader of this column, for a the Great Master pointed out more than 2,000 years ago, "Many have eyes but cannot see, and have ears but cannot hear, neither do they understand."

And so we try to reach only those who are ready as we go along, and have behind those who are still trapped in their own little boxes. There is no point in arguing with them or trying to win them over. Each must discover his own true path.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit my website at www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

The Feminine Facts Series

Empowering The Filipina through Education

FACT # 2 FOR AS LOW AS P100, CERVICAL CANCER CAN BE PREVENTED 10 TO 20 YEARS BEFORE IT OCCURS.

This is because it takes 10 to 20 years for a lesion in the cervix to become full-blown cancer. So, if the lesion is detected and treated early, cervical cancer - and its fatal outcome - can be prevented. Prevention can cost as low as P100 - the price of a Pap smear test.

"What tests are done to detect lesions on my cervix?"

Your physician often uses any one of these three painless and quick tests:

Acetic Wash - Your doctor washes your cervix with 3% acetic solution. The portion of your cervix that is not normal then turns white. Your doctor examines this white area closely to determine if it is a wound, an infection, or a cancerous lesion.

Colposcopy - Your doctor uses a colposcope machine to view your cervix. Because the machine magnifies the view 12 to 60 times, your doctor easily sees the areas that are not normal.

Pap smear - Using a little spatula, or a brush-tipped stick, or cotton bud, your doctor scrapes a little amount of tissue off your cervix. The scraped tissue is examined under a microscope to see if its cells are normal or abnormal.

Of these three, the Pap smear is most often recommended for detecting the presence of cervical cancer or the beginnings of such a cancer. If done early, the pre-cancerous lesion may be detected 10 to 20 years before it becomes full-blown cancer.

At the Philippine General Hospital, charity patients are charged a government-subsidized fee of only P100 for a Pap smear test, and indigent patients get the test for free. In private clinics and hospitals, the undisclosed fees for the test could be as high as P800. Even at such high costs, however, the test is worth it and the price is even too little compared with the life it saves.

"But I've heard "horror stories" about Pap smear."

Women, particularly the modest Filipina, understandably hesitate or are even scared to undergo the personal and intimate procedures of cervical examinations such as the Pap smear test. A study showed that after they are informed of how the test is done and how the test can save their lives, 9 out of 10 Filipino women willingly undergo the Pap smear test.

"It might be painful."

The Pap smear test may cause discomfort, but not pain. Tissue from the cervix is scraped very gently, so there is no pain in that. Discomfort might occur before the scraping, when the speculum is inserted to allow access to the cervix. Sometimes, the doctor might use a speculum that is one size too big; but this very rarely happens and - since there is a speculum of every size, even one for infants - the problem is quickly corrected. Sometimes, too, there is a wound in the patient's private parts; but the doctor will often see this clearly in the examination and will be extra careful to avoid annoying the wound. The most often source of pain, however, is the patient's tension. Her tension makes her muscles tighten and oppose the speculum, causing her discomfort. The solution? Relax. Those who will have their Pap smear for the first time can reduce their tension by first discussing the procedure with their doctor. During the examination, they can further relax by taking slow, deep breaths.

"It's humiliating."

Some women feel that the procedure intrudes on their privacy and degrades them. The procedure, however, is done in a very private and clinical setting, and its medical nature precludes malice. Real embarrassment could occur if the disease is not detected; when it becomes a full-blown cancer, it will produce an unpleasant odor that is difficult to hide in public.

"I have no time for it."

Going to a movie and going to the doctor probably requires the same amount of time for most people. The movie itself, however, lasts for more than one hour. In contrast, when a woman has her Pap smear taken, she will only spend some 10 minutes from the time she climbs on to the examination table until the time she gets off it. Ten minutes, or 1/6 of an hour, is hardly significant when viewed against the 8,760 hours we have in a year. But since a Pap smear test could save her life, the time she spends on it will be one of the most wisely spent ten minutes of her life.

"Nothing in me hurts, so I don't need the test."

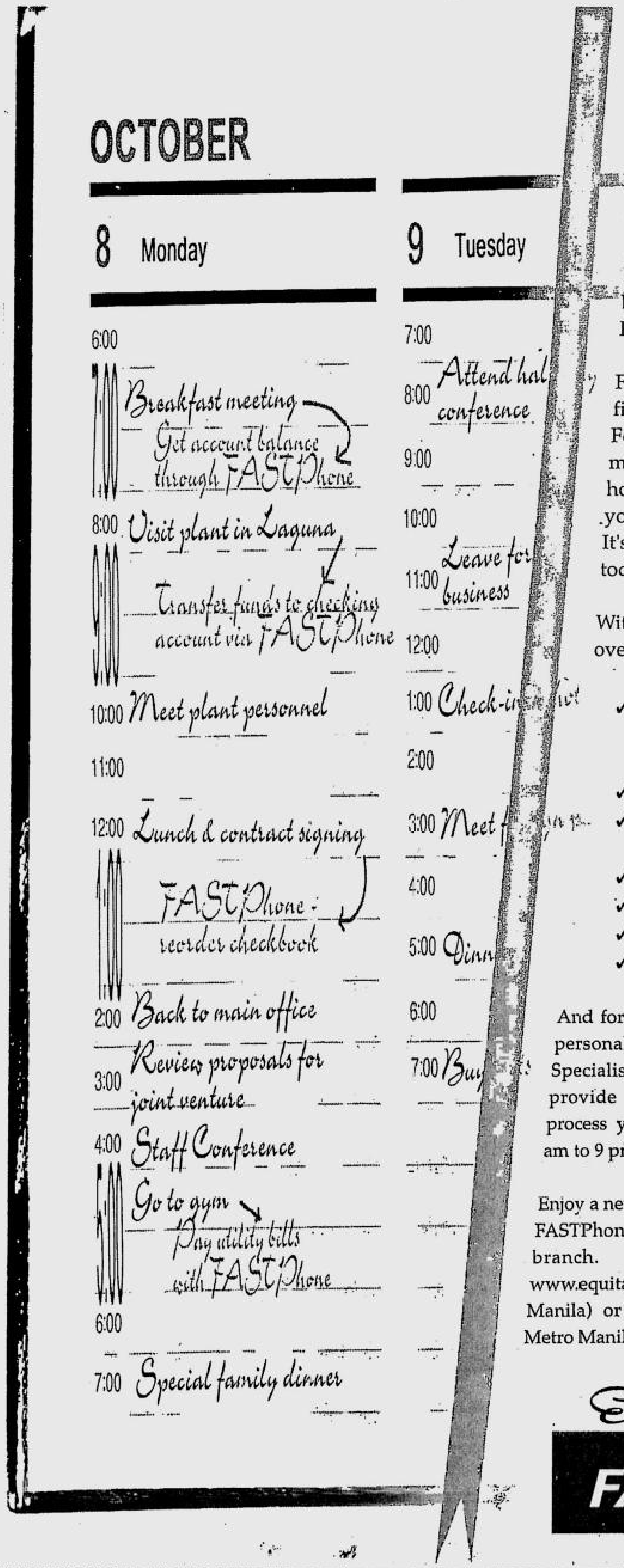
Unlike a tooth that can still be saved even when it already aches, a cervix with cancer begins to hurt only when the cancer is already incurable. That cervix - and, in many cases, the woman's life - can no longer be saved. What's more, a Pap smear would no longer be necessary, as the cancer will be obvious even without the test. The right time to have a Pap smear test is when nothing hurts yet. In fact, the test will help ensure that your cervix will not hurt later.

Learn more about the treatment for cervical cancer tomorrow, in Part 3 of this series.

If you are interested in a complete set of this four-part series, send a stamped, self-addressed legal envelope to: The FEMININE FACTS Series Secretariat, Marco Polo Medical Systems, Inc., G-12 & 13, San Jose Condominium, M[illegible]ginoo cor. Masigla Sts., Diliman, Quezon City. You may reach the Secretariat through telephone numbers 434-6625 to 26.

For further questions about cervical health, contact Dr. Cecilia A. Llave, M.D. at the UP-PGH Cancer Institute, through telephone numbers 526-6953 and 521-8450 loc. 3928, or e-mail her at cipgh0@lycos.com.

The FEMININE FACTS Series is a joint effort of the UP-PGH Cancer Institute and Marco Polo Medical Systems.


OCTOBER
8 Monday
6:00
7:00 Breakfast meeting
Get account balance through FASTPhone
8:00 Visit plant in Laguna
9:00 Transfer funds to checking account via FASTPhone
10:00 Meet plant personnel
11:00
12:00 Lunch & contract signing
1:00 FASTPhone - reorder checkbook
2:00 Back to main office
3:00 Review proposals for joint venture
4:00 Staff Conference
5:00 Go to gym
Pay utility bills with FASTPhone
6:00
7:00 Special family dinner
9 Tuesday
7:00
8:00 Attend hal conference
9:00
10:00
11:00 Leave for business
12:00
1:00 Check-in
2:00
3:00 Meet
4:00
5:00 Dinn
6:00
7:00 Bu

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SUBOK NA SUBOK. Tested tough ang New Improved Shell Rimula.
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- May laboratory-testing pa.

New Improved Shell Rimula.
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